THE TRUTH THAT SAVES

DICKSON

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The Truth that Saves

AND

HOW TO PRESENT IT.

BY

REV. J. A. R. DICKSON, B.D., Ph.D.,

PASTOR OF CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
GALT, ONT.

AUTHOR OF "WORKING FOR JESUS," "HOW WE ARE SAVED," ETC.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY,
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CONTENTS.

PREFACE.

I. THE DESIRE FOR FRUIT ..... PAGE 7

II. DIFFERENT KINDS OF TRUTHS IN THE WORD 15

III. THE TRUTH THAT SAVES 21

ITS THREE ELEMENTS:

(1) Christ's Death 24

(2) Christ's Burial 30

(3) Christ's Resurrection 36

IV. SUBSTITUTES FOR THE GOSPEL 50

(1) Calls to Faith 50

(2) Invitations to Christ 51

(3) A Conditioned Salvation 54

(4) The Gospel in its Widest Sense 57

(5) Offers of Salvation 60

V. PREPARATION FOR THE RECEPTION OF SAVING TRUTH 67

VI. THE TRUTH MADE EFFECTUAL TO SALVATION 81

VII. HOW TO PRESENT THE GOSPEL 94
(1) Intelligently 94
(2) Largely 99
(3) Lovingly 105
(4) Livingly 110
(5) Prayerfully 114
(6) Scripturally 118
(7) With the Holy Ghost 124

VIII. THE JOY OF PREACHING THE TRUTH THAT SAVES 132

PREFACE.

This little book is respectfully dedicated to all workers in the Spiritual Harvest, as a humble contribution of help in that service. May the Lord accompany it with his blessing! The theme is one that cannot become old and outgrown. It must ever, so long as a soul is to be saved, possess a deep and living interest. And in these days of earnest thought and increasing inquiry in reference to religious matters, the truth that should be specially preached for conversion is the grand question in many minds. And human wisdom is fruitful in fancies that fall far short of the truth. We need therefore to see clearly the saving truth of the Word, that which is specially used to bring rest to the heart and peace to the conscience and joy to the soul. To present this truth is the object of the following pages. And if what is written here should be used of God to give a hint to any earnestly seeking light; or help any, weary with striving with other means, to return to the simplicity of truth as it is in Jesus; or to stir up any to fresh devotion to the glorious gospel of the grace of God, the writer will be amply rewarded, and God shall have all the praise.

THE

TRUTH THAT SAVES.

I. THE DESIRE FOR FRUIT.

THE subject these words introduce to our consideration is one of the most interesting and important that can engage our attention, whether we are called to the public proclamation of the Truth or to its private ministry. It regards the right performance of one of our highest and holiest duties, for the heavenly edict has gone forth: "Let him that heareth say, come!" And all who do their duty in this spiritual service, like all who labor in any other sphere, must be, in some measure, anxious about the results of their work; they must be concerned to know, if it be possible, how it prospers, what blessing crowns it. He who has sown seed upon the soil looks for a harvest, and he who has spoken the word, and watered it by prayer for the quickening of the Holy Ghost, expects a return.

What can be more discouraging than to labor

long and see no fruit appear? What can be more troublesome than to have grave doubts arising ever and anon in the mind, like the ghosts of buried enemies, whose language is that there is a want of fitness, appropriateness, adaptation in our work? What can be more harassing than to be continually missing the mark or falling short of the end? What can be so bitter an ingredient in the bitterness of life as want of success, and especially want of success in such a work as the winning of souls? What can so exercise and exhaust the living forces of the Spirit? When John Howe was chaplain to Oliver Cromwell at Whitehall, he became weary of the turmoil and pomp of the palace, and wrote to his dear and honored brother Richard Baxter, telling him how much he longed to be back again to his beloved work at Torrington. "I have devoted myself, he said, to serve God in the work of the ministry, and how can I wait the pleasure of hearing their cries and complaints who may come to me under convictions."

Andrew A. Bonar, whose Diary and Letters are for a Christian worker a constant inspiration and help, is discovered to us in both, as ever on the outlook for conversions, as is evidenced by observations like these: "I do not know this

last season of one soul awakened in this place directly from my preaching." "To-night found a letter from Edinburgh from a soul that got blessing under the sermon in preaching which I had lost my freedom. Thus kind and sovereign is God."

"Heard of blessing attending my preaching in Huntly many years ago, in the case of two young men. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul'."

David Brainerd kept a keen eye upon the pagan Indians to whom he preached, to note every hopeful indication of a change in them. He felt the burden of souls. How his heart would throb as he penned these sentences touching the Indians at Crossweeksung: "When I parted from them, one told me, with many tears, 'she wished God would change her heart;' another that 'she wanted to find Christ;' and an old man who had been one of their chiefs wept bitterly with concern for his soul." That would be to him like water to the thirsty, and as day-dawn after a long weary night! Oh, how it would refresh him! Another passage may be given as more fully illustrating his desire to discover the souls of those whom he addressed turning to the Lord: "Discoursed to a number of my people in one of their houses in a more private manner. Inquired particularly

into their spiritual states, in order to see what impressions they were under. Laid before them the marks of a regenerate, as well as of an unregenerate state; and endeavored to suit and direct my discourse to them severally according as I apprehended their states to be. There were a considerable number gathered together before I finished my discourse, and several seemed much affected while I was urging the necessity and infinite importance of getting into a renewed state. I find particular and close dealing with souls in private is often very successful."

Dr. Edward Payson of Portland was a kindred spirit. His biographer tells us: "He loved his work; when not exhausted by fatigue or depressed by illness, he was specially fond of the exercise of preaching—so much so, that he considered it no favor for a wayfaring brother to offer to supply his place, gratuitously, on a Sabbath. He felt, to use his own comparison, about as much obliged for such an offer, as he should to a man for proposing to eat up a good dinner prepared for himself, when he was half starved. In preparing for the pulpit, it was uniformly his object to introduce so much of the grand truths of the gospel into every discourse, that a person who had never heard a sermon before, and should

never hear another, might learn from it what was essential to salvation." How grandly does that speak out his desire to save some !

Samuel Rutherford in his precious letters, that smell of myrrh and cassia, writes in this way from "Christ's Palace in Aberdeen :" "It were my heaven, till I come home, even to spend this life in gathering some home to Christ." To his parishioners at Anwoth, he writes, "I long exceedingly to hear of your on-going and advancement in your journey to the kingdom of God. My only joy out of heaven is to hear that the seed of God sown among you is growing and coming to an harvest; for I ceased not, while I was among you, in season and out of season, (according to the measure of grace given unto me) to warn and stir up your minds; and I am free from the blood of all men; for I have communicated to you the whole counsel of God." How he yearned over his people was seen not only while he preached to them, but afterwards in his imprisonment when he wrote to them. He was one of those deep experimental divines whom we prize so highly, whose value is beyond all price, because they open up our way into the deep things of God. These may be regarded as representing the entire host of faithful men who in the

providence of God have been called to preach the gospel. Like the great apostle of the Gentiles they desire to "save some," (Rom. 2 : 14) and "have some fruit" (Rom. 1 : 13) among those to whom their message comes.

There is a soothing opiate that many take today to give ease from the troublesome pain which comes of seeing no fruit ; it is dispensed in this form : "Duty is ours, results are God's." That is true, but it evidently carries a very limited sense in the word "duty" if it leaves out all concern for the success of the Word in the soul of the hearer. And especially since the want of success, the lack of results, may be the legitimate outcome of an imperfectly presented gospel. Truth may be preached, but not the truth that saves ; and that being the case conversions will be few and far between. We are entitled to look for the salvation of those to whom the gospel is proclaimed. Our Lord said to his apostles : "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." John 15 : 16. John says in his third epistle, vers. 2–4, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly when the

brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth."

Paul writing to the Romans makes this acknowledgment: "Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles." Rom. 1 : 13. How deeply he is touched by the defection of the volatile Galatians! "Oh, foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh? Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain." It is just as reasonable to look for fruit to accompany and crown the preached word, as it is for a fisherman to expect a draught of fishes, or a farmer a crop of grain, or a miner an explosion, when the proper means have been used to secure the result. The very form of the gospel statement involves this: "Believe on the Lord

Jesus Christ and *thou shalt be saved.*" The proclamation of the gospel is for the accomplishment of this specific end, and not to look for it is unbelief. It is a wilful disregard to the plainest statement of the Word—which ought to fill the soul with strong expectation, so that it will watch and wish and pray for the result.

In the attractive and quickening memoir of Robert Murray McCheyne the sainted author observes : "In the care of a faithful ministry, success is the rule—want of it, the exception." And a greater than he has said : "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

It is of this sacred fruit, this soul-winning, this harvest home from the spiritual field that we would now speak as plainly and pointedly as possible.

II. DIFFERENT KINDS OF TRUTHS IN THE WORD.

WERE we building to-day a house for ourselves to dwell in, or a palace in which a king might hold his state, we would gather together all kinds of stones. They would all be stones, but suitable for widely different services. The large blocks of rough rubble would be placed in the foundations, the finely polished stones would adorn the corners, the hewn stones would fill in the blind walls, while noble slabs, well trimmed, and perhaps bearing some lovely carving, would be used as lintels, and the choicest bits, of clean grain and beautiful color, would occupy the place of mullion bars, dividing the windows into convenient spaces for the light. Others might be employed for the ascending steps, and others for the outspread floor to bear the patter of the feet of many generations. As it is with the stones in their service in building a human habitation, so it is with the truths which are found in the treasure-house of God's word. Each has its own mission. Each has its own special duty in the building up of human character and in the working out of human

destiny. They do not contradict and confound one another, they rather conspire together to reach the great result, a new creation in Christ Jesus, a new life, with a new song, a new hope, and new motives that rejoice in the living force and gracious urgency of the truths as they speak out God's thought and express God's feeling.

God has conferred two great gifts on the world: the *word of Revelation*, for "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God;" and the *Word of Promise*, who was in the beginning with God, and whom, when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. This redemptive work having been accomplished, now the word of Revelation contains all that concerns the Word of Promise. Indeed, the Word of Promise is embalmed and preserved in the word of Revelation. In it his preëxistence with the Father, his miraculous conception, his lowly birth, his life of human conditions, his work revealing his deity, his vicarious death, with all their attendant circumstances, with the prophecies in type and symbol and song that went before upon him, are all conserved with the glowing vividness and reality of one of Titian's pictures, so that we may

say with Count Anhault that "the whole Scriptures are but the swaddling bands of the child Jesus."

But the word of Revelation that brings to our knowledge the life and love and labor of the Lord Jesus Christ is a large and comprehensive word, with many purposes to serve, many ends to secure. As in the *materia medica* of the physician there are stimulants that excite vital action, sedatives that soothe and assuage pain, tonics that increase strength and give vigor to the system, restoratives that renew life, and prophylactics that ward off disease, and many other potions that have each their independent sphere and distinct work, so it is in the *materia medica* of the spiritual physician. There are truths that are suitable to every condition of heart and soul, truths that quicken the soul into spiritual consciousness, truths that inspire or incite faith, truths that comfort, truths that caution, truths that guide, truths that bear high hopes, truths that unveil God and heaven and the hereafter, truths that save. Every truth, like every seed, is a truth "after his kind." It has something distinctive and peculiar, both in itself and in its sphere, and in its action. And to distinguish between these is, according to the apostle's declara-

tion, "rightly to divide the word of truth;" and to apply them with proper discrimination to suitable cases is to "show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

The word of God not only opens the way of life to man, it also defines it and provides for it, till he reaches the goal, the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. The word of God is not simply for conversion, it is for the life that conversion leads a man into, with all its vast and varied endowments. It is to cheer the disconsolate, to encourage the fearful and the faltering, to strengthen the weak, to inspire the despairing and the hopeless to whom life loses all its bright, sweet life, to support the strong; in one word, it is so to enfold man with its multiform ministries as that it shall meet all the experiences of human life, and bring them all into conformity with God's will. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

The truth being thus varied in its matter and in its design, it is our duty to select that part of it which God has appointed unto the salvation of

the soul. Or, speaking with greater accuracy—for salvation spans man's widest horizon and compasses his entire existence—the conversion of the soul from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. Dr. Lyman Beecher wrote to his daughter Catherine on this point, "God acts by your means in proportion as they are wisely adapted; and you will bring the sinner to submit by pressing the reasons and shedding light, *light*, LIGHT, sooner than if you merely reiterated, submit, *submit*, SUBMIT." Dr. Beecher's position was as he himself announces it: "God governs mind by motive and not by force." And that is in accord with Paul's words, "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Again he says, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men."

Duncan Matheson, the Scottish evangelist, speaking of a work of grace in and around Aberdeen, says, "The truth that above all others seems to be owned is—'You are lost. A Saviour has been provided. It is your duty to accept him now.' Ruin by the fall, righteousness by

Christ, and regeneration only by the Holy Ghost, are the leading truths in every address."

Here is seen the wisdom of the Christian worker, in the adaptation of the means he uses to the end he seeks to attain. How attractively this shines out from this simple word in Acts 8:5,8, "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." "And there was great joy in that city."

III. THE TRUTH THAT SAVES.

"THE Gospel is *the power of God unto salvation* to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek." It is the divine provision for the deep spiritual need of man. In the New Testament "the Gospel" has notable descriptive words added to it, qualifying it, such as "the Gospel of God," Rom. 1, "the Gospel of the grace of God," Acts 20 : 24, "the Gospel of your salvation," Eph. 1 : 13, "the Gospel of Christ," Rom. 1 : 6. Each of these descriptive words casts a ray of light upon the one fact, the great central fact of which they all speak.

It is the Gospel of God, because it originates with God, and bears the stamp of his character on its face, for God is love. It tells us of God's great love in giving his only-begotten and well-beloved Son to die in the room of the sinner—a love so inconceivable by us, that the door to the highest flights of our imagination and the widest and grandest excursions of our thought, is opened by the word "so." "God *so* loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." Who can scale the heights or fathom the depths of the little particle "so"? As Charles Wesley has so sweetly and so truly sung:

> "God only knows the love of God—
> Stronger his love than death or hell;
> Its riches are unsearchable;
> The first-born sons of light
> Desire in vain its depths to see:
> They cannot reach the mystery,
> The length and breadth and height."

It is the Gospel of the grace of God, because it proceeds from the free and unmerited mercy and compassion of God toward the guilty sons of men who are sunk in misery and doubly condemned; condemned by the holy law, and also by their own consciences. He pardoneth iniquity and passeth by transgressions. He is "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

It is the Gospel of our Salvation, because its object is the salvation of the soul. It sets the prisoner free, it justifies the guilty, it reconciles us to God. It restores man to the fellowship of

God with all its ineffable joys. It makes him a son of God, and therefore an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. Salvation truly begun is always gloriously finished. "He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. 1 : 6. "I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." John 10 : 28.

It is the Gospel of Christ, because Christ is the One who works out the will of God. He is the mediator of the new covenant. He made reconciliation for the sins of the people. He trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him. He is the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world.

Now, what is the gospel of Christ ? Gospel is the Anglo-Saxon god, *i. e.*, good, and spell, *i. e.* tidings or news. Good tidings. The gospel of Christ, therefore, is good tidings about Christ. When the angel announced the birth of Christ to the shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night, near Bethlehem, he said, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The gospel was that Christ was a Sav-

iour. Often the term "gospel" is used in an unlimited sense, as applying to the whole of revealed truth, the entire volume of the Scriptures. It is not so employed here. It is employed here in its restricted sense as covering only the realm of Christ's redemptive work — that which is distinctively the truth that saves. It is the announcement of what Christ has done to redeem men, and therefore an announcement of historical facts. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, chap. 15 :1–3, declares the gospel to consist of three facts: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by *which also ye are saved,* if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ *died for our sins,* according to the Scriptures, and *that he was buried,* and that *he rose again* the third day according to the Scriptures."

The gospel according to this statement of Paul's is constituted of these three facts, 1st, Christ died for our sins; 2d, He was buried, 3d, He rose again.

1st. CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS. His death was substitutionary. It was *for our sins.* He was of himself under no necessity to die. He was "the

Life," "the Prince of Life" John 14 : 6 ; Acts 3 : 15. "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." John 5 : 26. He laid down his life voluntarily : "Therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." John 10 : 17–18. But in doing this he bore the burden of human sin. "The Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa. 53 : 6. He "was delivered for our offenses." Rom. 4 : 25. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." 1 Pet. 2 : 24. He died under the curse of the sin that was laid upon him. He was therefore the sinner's substitute. Daniel tells us that the Messiah shall be cut off, but not for himself." Isaiah in the fifty-third chapter of his prophecies, which is a large testimony to the substitutionary work of Christ, says : "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities ; the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . It pleased the Lord to bruise him ; he hath put him to grief ; when thou shalt make his soul an offer-

ing for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Verses 5, 10.

Paul says, "When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5 : 6–8. In dying, Christ so met the claims of God's holy law against the sinner, that we have such strong and emphatic declarations as these are: "Christ *hath* redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. 3 : 13. "*He was made to be sin for us*, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5 : 21. "Christ also hath *once suffered for sins*, the JUST for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," 1 Pet. 3 : 18. "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Heb. 9 : 26. He, so John told his disciples, was "the Lamb of God which beareth away the sin of the world." Up to his day, sacrificial offerings had been made, according to God's own appointment, of lambs, or goats, or bullocks, or doves, in keeping with the abliity of the worshipper, and in presenting them the offerer

had "put his hand upon the head of the burnt-offering," and it was "accepted for him, (i. e., instead of him) to make atonement for him." These were all types of God's coming sacrifice, Christ Jesus. These foreshadowed him. This is the explanation the epistle to the Hebrews, the divine and therefore infallible commentary on the Levitical Institute, gives us: "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. 10 : 12–14.

The completeness of this act, its glorious perfection, is intimated in passages like this: "Who, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb. 1 : 3. And this: "Who needeth not daily, as those high-priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once when he offered up himself." Heb. 7 : 27. And this: "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered

himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. 9 : 13, 14.

"Christ died for our sins." Of Christ's death we have the clearest and fullest evidence. His physical death was made sure by the thrust of the Roman spear into the centre of physical vitality, the heart. The soldiers, we are told by John, brake the legs of the malefactors who were crucified with Jesus. "But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water. And he that saw it bear record, and his record is true ; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe." John 19 : 33–35. The physical death was the least part of Christ's dying on the cross. No doubt that had many distressing accompaniments, such as the terrible thirst of a fevered and disordered frame through the laceration of the cruel nails, and the furrows ploughed upon his back by the scourging in Pilate's hall ; and the railing of the malefactors, the derision of the elders, the mockery of the soldiers, and the reviling of those passing by, all added to the agony of the cross. But the chief element of that death was the spiritual

element—the desertion of the Father, the withdrawal of the light and comfort of God's face which caused him to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Why was the Son forsaken of the Father? Why was he caused to pass through such a bitter experience? Why was the flow of communion broken and the heart left desolate? It was because sin was laid on him, and was being punished in him. His soul was made an offering for sin. He was suffering for sins. How long he suffered we may not be able to tell, but we know this that his suffering culminated in the cross. It was in force in Gethsemane. It was felt in the temptation in the wilderness. It beat in upon him, as the incoming tide beats upon the rocks along the coast, all through his life. He suffered being tempted. He endured the contradiction of sinners against himself. The misery and woe of a weary, sinning world were borne in upon his heart, and he "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." The dark shadow of the cross rested upon all his life, but on Calvary he drank the cup of God's wrath to the dregs, so that he was able to say, "It is finished." The great redemptive work is done. The kingdom of heaven is open to all believers.

"Finished all the types and shadows
Of the ceremonial law;
Finished all that God has promised,
Death and hell no more shall awe.
It is finished!
Saints from hence your comfort draw."

2nd. *Christ was buried.* In the atoning death of Christ we have the principal fact of the gospel, the great central fact, in which all his work culminates. What significance then are we to attach to his burial? It must have some important purpose to serve when Paul gives it such prominence as to constitute it an element of the gospel. Now what does it tell us? What special message of good does it bear? What is its great practical import? Is not this element omitted very largely in preaching? Yet it was ever present to the thoughts of our Lord. When the woman, in that beautiful act of hers, revealing her love to Christ, her adoring reverence, her self-sacrifice and unselfish devotion, poured an alabaster-box of very precious ointment on his head, his defence of her act against the mercenary thoughts of the disciples was, "She hath wrought a good work upon me, for in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial." What then is the meaning of Christ's burial? We answer,

I. The burial of Christ was the lowest point of his humiliation. The sin laid upon him carried him into the grave. As the representative of the race he had to bear all the curse of sin, and this was part of it: "Dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return." So we find Christ saying prophetically in Psalm 22:15, "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death." This shows how completely he gave himself for his people. There was no reserve. Nothing was abhorrent to him. He entered so perfectly into man's estate that he was partaker of all its misery and abasement and suffering. He kept nothing back. He gave himself.

II. The burial of Christ marks the decided consummation and reality of his death. It assures us that it was a true death and not one merely in seeming. There was no deception in it. It was not a pious fraud. How many witnesses have we of the fact! The Roman soldiers witnessed to it who brake not his legs because he was already dead. John 19:33. And they made it doubly sure by the spear thrust into his heart. John 19:34. Joseph of Arimathea who begged the body of the Lord from Pilate that he might honor it with burial, and Nicodemus who brought a hundred pounds' weight of myrrh and aloes

wherewith to embalm him, both witness to the truth of his death and to the fact of his burial. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid. And the watch Pilate gave the chief priests and the Pharisees, which made the sepulchre sure, and sealed the stone and kept guard over it, witness to the fact of his being buried, and consequently to the truth of his being dead.

III. The burial of Christ was a fulfilment of prophecies that went before upon him. And these indicate how the burial of Christ was in the mind of God. The purpose was from all eternity matured.

In the sixteenth Psalm we have the passage quoted by Peter on the day of Pentecost in proof of his resurrection, and therefore proving the fact of his burial. Peter tells us that it was prophetic: "For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face; for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved, therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope; because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell (or Hades), neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the way of life; thou shalt make

me full of joy with thy countenance." Acts 2 : 25–28.

When the scribes and Pharisees came to our Lord seeking a sign in attestation of the divinity of his mission, he made answer that his burial would be the only sign given them : "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah ; for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly ; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Matt. 12 : 39, 40. Another prophetic passage fulfilled to the letter in Christ's burial is found in Isaiah 53 : 9 : "He made his grave with the wicked, with the rich in his death," or as Albert Barnes translated it, "And his grave was appointed with the wicked ; but he was with the rich man in his death." That was the natural order of events that his grave should be appointed with the wicked, for a reputed malefactor had every indignity heaped upon him, and was often denied honorable burial, being cast out into Gehenna. But in the case of Christ events took an unlooked-for turn—a turn which no finite mind could have foreseen, and "he was with the rich man in his death," *i. e.*, his burial. Joseph of Arimathea was a rich man,

and put his body, wrapped in linen and embalmed with spices, in a new tomb hewn out in the rock where never man had yet lain : thus fulfilling this prophecy to the letter.

IV. In his burial he went down into the dark domain of death to conquer the king of terrors. This is what we are told in Hebrews 2 : 14, 15 : "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise himself took part of the same ; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil ; and deliver those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." And so effectually did he do this, that he rose again, because it was not possible he should be holden of it. Now he claims sovereignty here. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen ; and have the keys of hell (Hades) and death." He has conquered the king of terrors in his own province. Well may we joyfully sing with Isaac Watts :

"Hosanna to the Prince of Light,
That clothed himself in clay,
Entered the iron gates of death
And tore the bars away.
Death is no more the king of dread,
Since our Immanuel rose;
He took the tyrant's sting away
And spoiled our hellish foes."

V. By his burial he has changed utterly the character of the grave. It is no longer in the eyes of a believer "the long home;" it is a cemetery, a sleeping-place. And oh, how short a sleep! He has transformed the most dismal part of life's experiences into a quiet resting-place, so that it might be said of the dead, "He sleepeth," and of those committed to the dust, "They shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds." Isa. 57 : 2.

He has robbed the grave of its repulsive dread, sweetened it with the perfume of his spices, and filled it with his holy light. He has given his people a heart of bright hope, and put a new song in their mouth: "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory!" 1 Cor. 15 : 55. He has given his ministers a new note in their preaching: "All things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or DEATH, or things present or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." 1 Cor. 3 : 22, 23. He has taken the sting from death, and the grave no longer can retain its tenantry. Men and women believing in the Lord call death their friend, and pass hence rejoicing in the hope of a glorious resurrection. The believer says of his spirit, "Absent

from the body, present with the Lord,' and of his body, "My flesh shall rest in hope." By the burial of Christ light shines in the place that before was darkest. Go into an old Roman cemetery and stand among its costly tombs, the expression of tender love and undying affection. What a dismal spot it is! Read the inscriptions. What darkness is in them, what heart-breaks, what inconsolable misery, what boundless grief! "Vale, vale, eternum vale." Farewell, farewell, an eternal farewell! What deep darkness, blinding darkness rests there at the very point where our bruised and aching hearts need light most! But Christ has dispelled the darkness and brought life and immortality to light. Turn all this revelation on the words of the psalmist and how they deepen: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." What reason then have we to bless God that "Christ was buried."

3d. *Christ rose from the dead.* This is the third fact that enters into the gospel, and it is one of far-reaching consequence. It binds together the whole structure of Christ's work. It is the keystone of the arch built up by our Lord in his sacrificial atonement, an arch whose foundations

are laid in the dark depths where sin seethes and hisses, but which springs up into the heavenly heights crowned with glory. Often has it been vehemently and vigorously assaulted, but it has never been disproved. It shines on, as the sun shines in the firmament, illuminating all, and far removed from all the noise and strife of querulous and contentious men. On it hangs the whole weight of our faith and hope and salvation. So Paul assures us: "If Christ be not risen then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false-witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ; whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."

Concerning no historical event have we more abundant proof, nor more satisfactory. It is simply overwhelming. It bears us on as a swollen stream bears driftwood. Matthew tells us of the descent of an angel from heaven, who rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and sat on the stone: of a great earthquake

speaking out the presence of God: of the message the angel delivered to the woman who came to see the sepulchre, of Christ's resurrection: "He is not here; for he is risen, as he said; come see the place where the Lord lay." Matt. 28: 1–6. So the angel declared to them the resurrection. He reminded them of our Lord's oft-repeated words: "Be killed, and be raised again the third day." John in his gospel connects the events of that morning and gives us a complete view, Chap. 20: 1–18. The women were earliest at the sepulchre, and finding the stone rolled away and the sepulchre empty, they ran to tell Peter and John; on coming, John stooped down, and looking in saw the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in; but Peter coming went in and saw the linen clothes lie, and the napkin that was about his head not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then John went in, encouraged by Peter, and he saw and believed. For as yet they knew not the Scripture, that he must rise again from the dead. Satisfied with what they had seen they returned home. But a woman's heart is not so easily contented, so Mary lingers still, standing without "at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept she stooped down and

looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni! which is to say, Master!" There is instant recognition now. The use of the familiar personal name unseals the heart and opens the eyes and Jesus stands revealed, and the demonstration of the resurrection is complete. The empty grave is not enough, for as Mary suggests, Christ might have been borne away to some other place; but the living person puts the matter for her beyond doubt. Mary was about to throw herself at his feet and clasp his knees, but Jesus withholds her. "Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto

my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God." And Mary obeyed Christ's word, and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and what he had said to her. In the remainder of John's gospel we have repeated appearances of Christ recorded.

Peter, on the day of Pentecost, spoke of Christ's rising in this way: "Whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it."

Stephen witnessed to the risen Saviour: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." Acts 7 : 56. This fact always stood at the forefront of Apostolic preaching. Everywhere it is seen. In the fifteenth chapter of Paul's epistle to the Corinthians we have the proofs marshalled in order, and a strong and irresistible argument constructed upon them. And so much did Paul make of this doctrine at Athens, that the wise men there said: "He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." The living and witnessing church of Christ to-day is a proof that Christ is not dead, but alive again, and alive for evermore. What does the resurrection of Christ mean? It means

very much, and that we ought to understand as clearly as possible, because on it depends to a large extent our comfort of heart, and our peace of mind, and our power for service.

1st. It was a clear proof of his being divine. Had he been a mere man death would have reigned over him and kept him in thraldom. But he rose in triumph over death and the grave; "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." He was the Prince of Life, who for the redemption of sinful men made himself of no reputation, and took on him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." The resurrection of Christ is a demonstration of his divinity.

2d. He rose for our justification. His rising made it manifest that he had put away sin—

"purged our sins" so effectually that he was now without sin. Our sins were laid on him, and on the cross he paid the death penalty, and in his rising from the dead we have the receipt, showing that now no charge stands against him who receives Christ and trusts in his atoning sacrifice. His perfect work is that on account of which we are pardoned: and his resurrection declares its perfection and its acceptance of God.

3d. He was the first-fruits of them that slept; "the first-born from the dead." He, in this respect, is a representative person. He shows the life that he has brought as Adam showed the death he wrought. "If by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by One, Jesus Christ." "Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming." Rom. 5 : 17; 1 Cor. 15 : 21, 23.

There were resurrections prior to that of our Lord, those of Jairus' daughter, the widow of Nain's son, and Lazarus, and there were "many

bodies of the saints which slept, who arose and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." But it was by his power that all these events took place. He could affirm with the fullest meaning in his words, "I am the resurrection and the life." The wonderful change wrought by Christ's resurrection is sweetly sung by one of our English poets, Henry Vaughan. It is entitled

EASTER HYMN.

Death and darkness, get you packing:
Nothing now to man is lacking.
All your triumphs now are ended,
And what Adam marred is mended.
Graves are beds now for the weary;
Death a nap, to make more merry;
Youth now full of pious duty,
Seeks in thee for perfect beauty;
The weak and aged, tired with length
Of days, from thee look for new strength;
And infants with thy pangs contest
As pleasant as if with the breast.
Then unto him who thus hath thrown
Even to contempt thy kingdom down,
And by his blood did us advance
Unto his own inheritance,
To him be glory, power, and praise
From this unto the last of days!

In Christ's resurrection we have the type of our rising from the grave. Sown natural bodies, we

shall rise spiritual bodies. He "shall change our body of humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3 : 21.

"If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom. 6 : 5.

4th. He rose that he might complete his redemption by its effectual application to the hearts and lives of men. It was not enough that the high-priest offered sacrifice at the altar ; he had to carry the blood into the most holy place, and there sprinkle it before the mercy-seat and upon the mercy-seat. The voice of the blood, representing the life that had been sacrificed, had to speak there. And there it was accepted as a "sweet savor," pleasing to God, on behalf of those for whom it was offered. And the high-priest issuing from the most holy place, lifted up his hands and blessed the people. So Christ has entered into heaven to appear in the presence of God for us ; entered "by his own blood," "having obtained eternal redemption for us." He is there "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." "And because he continueth ever, he hath an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore he

is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." The exaltation to God's right hand is the crowning of him with glory and honor. From thence he carries on to its final accomplishment the redemptive work he has undertaken. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Psa. 110 : 1 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 25, 26.

5th. He went to the Father that he might send the Holy Spirit. The Spirit came in fulfillment of Christ's promise as his resurrection gift. He said to his disciples : "It is expedient for you that I go away ; for if I depart I will send him unto you. And when he is come he will reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment." He outlined the office-work still further as he said : "He shall testify of me," "He will guide you into all truth," "He shall glorify me," "He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." He applies all Christ's atoning work effectually to the heart and transforms the believer into the likeness of his Lord.

How important then is the resurrection of Christ! How evidently necessary it is as an element of the good tidings of great joy. Without it everything would have been involved in darkness. But with it everything is brought into the beautiful, sweet light. We can say now, The darkness is past and the light now shineth. The Sun of Righteousness, of whom Malachi sang, has risen, and holds his place on the circle of the heavens.

These three facts constitute the gospel by which we are saved. When once they are distinctly seen, they ever, as we read the sacred Scriptures, rise to the mind, and touch the conscience and the heart. They are like the outline of Washington made by two crooked trees at Mt. Vernon. Look at the trees and the shadowy figure may not be seen, but once observe it and you cannot look again without seeing it. There it stands in striking boldness. So is it with Christ's substitutionary work: everywhere there is an altar and a sacrifice, and the shedding of blood, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. The central fact is the death of Christ. His birth into our nature, and his life on earth in which he entered into the misery of our condition, were necessary to this. He came expressly to die. He did not die simply because

he was here, but he came to die. That was announced by the angel, "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." John reiterates the same truth, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Paul gives us a proverb current in the early church embodying the same thought: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This was Christ's principal character, this overtopped all others. That this is, in the mind of the Spirit of God, the ruling aspect of Christ, now and for ever, here and hereafter, is evident from these representations in the Apocalypse of John: "And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb, as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Ch. 5 : 6. "These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, etc." "The Lamb which is in the midst of the throne." Ch. 7 : 14, 17. His birth, his life, his miracles, all fall away out of sight, because they formed at once the altar on which his vicarious sacrifice was presented to God, and the scene on

which his true divinity was revealed to the world. It was necessary that he should be man; but being man, the main act of his life, that to which all others were subordinated, was his death—a death for sin. These facts as forming the gospel, and their central one Jesus Christ and him crucified, should be seen as with a sunbeam—seen so as never to be obscured, or forgotten, or missed; as the truth that saves. As Richard Sibbs observes: "Christ is the great ordinance of God for our salvation. The gospel is the great ordinance of God, to lay open the unsearchable riches of Christ."

All that man needs to quiet his conscience, to satisfy his mind, and to impart peace to his heart is found in the atonement of Christ.

He is the sinner's substitute. He assumed all his responsibilities, took his place, met the claims of God's holy law in a life of holiness and in a death of suffering for sin. He, being divine, had something to offer. Had he been only man he would have had nothing to offer. He offered "himself." All his work was voluntary. And he being the God-man, Emmanuel, God with us, this gave his sacrifice an infinite value. He was the mass of gold paid down for the millions of copper or nickel coin. Christ, by virtue of his

divine character, could atone for millions, and in a brief space atone for all transgression and sin. So that God could say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And now he who hides in Christ, who trusts in him, is saved—saved with an everlasting salvation.

Thus we have found the gospel to be the announcement of certain historic facts in reference to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, which are of universal interest, and the belief of which becomes the power of God unto salvation for the individual. We should therefore distinguish between the gospel and much that in our day passes current for it. There are many things that seem to be gold, but they are only gilded. They are like the mirage in the desert; it is the vision of palm-trees and flowing water, but it is only a vision, there is no substantial reality there. These are often made

IV. SUBSTITUTES FOR THE GOSPEL.

They need to be pointed out just as the course of a vessel into New York harbor is, lest the precious craft should run aground and unspeakable damage be the result. Our Lord's commission to his apostles was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16 : 15, 16. In this commission we should note the order.

(1.) It corrects an error into which many fall, as it shows the relation of faith to the gospel. The gospel and the faith of the gospel are two things, no doubt related to each other, but still different. Faith follows the hearing of the gospel, as Paul declares, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom. 10 : 17. Again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." John 3:36. Believing is based on a knowledge of the Son. It is the outcome of that knowledge. Knowledge inspires faith. Faith cannot exist without an object. In the gospel men are called unto faith ; indeed, shut up unto faith. That is the one all-necessary work they

are to do now in order to justification. The call to faith always supposes the statement of Christ's atoning work as preceding it and bringing it into existence. Dr. Robert Boyd, of Chicago, says, "The work of man's salvation was finished on the cross. This we are called upon to believe as a completed fact. Our faith does not make the fact, but rests upon it as established by God's word. The work was done before the faith existed, and was wholly independent of it. Yet unless I believe in the finished work I cannot be saved by it, but am still under condemnation. 'He that believeth not is condemned already.' Thus the work of Christ on the cross, eighteen hundred years ago, and my personal interest in it are two different things." We need so thoroughly to distinguish them that we may never imagine that the one can take the place of the other. The call to faith supposes the gospel truth as going before. That quickens faith in the soul. That makes faith possible. That by the operation of the Holy Spirit brings faith into existence.

(2.) Again, invitations to come to Christ, to accept Christ, are not the gospel, but are based upon the gospel, and in this way are so closely related to it that they are often regarded as being

the gospel. The recognition of the difference will be of great moment, especially when looking for results. Invitations are to be given in all the winsome and attractive ways we can conceive, yet we must see to it that they are not empty and therefore ineffective invitations. If we use such we are fishing with a bare hook. We are hunting without lead in our gun whereby to bring down the game. If we consider the invitations of the Bible we shall find in them some solid fact, some great spiritual reality, some good that we are to attain, presented to our minds. There is some blessing offered to us, which we need, in and through the Lord Jesus, which makes the invitation effective. Take the gracious invitation of Matthew 11, and take it in its completeness, and how mighty it is upon the heart! "All things are delivered unto me of my Father, and no man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." *Christ* offers REST to the distressed and burdened sons of men, and that in view of the fact that *all things* (or as it is in the 28th chapter, verse 18, *all power in heaven and in earth*) are delivered unto him. How rich that

gospel is! Christ is the giver of rest, because he has been the bearer of sin.

Take the invitation in the evangelical prophet Isaiah: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Chap. 53 : 1, 2. The Lord Jehovah, our Saviour-God, is the speaker, and his invitation is to himself as the water of life and as the bread of life. He gives both, which all men so pressingly need, without money and without price, that is, freely.

The invitation which closes the book of Revelation is of a kind nature. Christ is the speaker, and his appeal is to the deep-seated thirst in us, which nothing can quench but the life of God, symbolized by the living water. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Oh, how sweet this is! how grateful to our parched souls! Christ has opened the foun-

tain of the water of life, come drink. Ye are perishing of thirst, drink and live. The invitation always has beneath it or before it the grand gospel fact, which gives it birth, and makes it attractive and powerful over the mind and heart. It always arises out of the provision that has been made.

(3.) Paul speaks of "another gospel which is not another," whereby the Galatians had been carried away from Christ. And so greatly is his soul exercised about this, that he speaks strongly. "There be some which trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1 : 7–9. That expresses the feeling of the great apostle with regard to pure gospel preaching. He is jealous of the grace of God. He does not want any adulteration of the simple, soul-saving story. He will not let man come in where Christ must be seen alone. The teachers to whom he refers were Jews who insisted on circumcision, saying, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved."

So he says to them: "Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal. 5 : 2--4. That is, you have changed your standing ground; you are trusting to your own doings, rather than to what Christ has done. Therefore

> "Lay your deadly doings down,
> Down at Jesus' feet;
> Stand in him, in him alone
> Gloriously complete."

The snare laid for the Galatians is often laid for the feet of poor, lost sinners. Laid unwittingly sometimes. Laid in ignorance at other times. But always to do damage to the soul, whensoever or by whomsoever laid. "The law is not of faith; but the man that doeth them shall live in them," Paul affirms, and then he utters the grand gospel statement: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through

faith." Gal. 3 : 12–14. "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Rom. 4 : 4, 5.

This other gospel, which is not another, finds in us too ready a welcome. It makes us after all of some consequence. It does not humble us. It does not declare our utterly lost and helpless condition, and so has many admirers. But it imperils the souls of men. It hinders them from relying wholly upon Christ as their Saviour, and saying with Toplady:

> "Nothing in my hand I bring;
> Simply to thy cross I cling;
> Naked, come to thee for dress;
> Helpless, look to thee for grace;
> Foul, I to the fountain fly;
> Wash me, Saviour, or I die."

We must allow nothing to keep us out of the sinner's place, for it is there we find the sinner's Saviour. Christ does not help us to save ourselves, he saves us from first to last. Trusting therefore to anything we can do just cuts us off from reliance upon Christ. And that is to be cut off from life eternal. If we hold one of our fingers close enough to our eye we may shut out all

the light of the sun blazing in his noonday splendor. So by trusting to any work of our own, we are unfit to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ with our whole heart. Let us beware of this perversion of the gospel!

(4.) The term "Gospel" is frequently applied to the whole Bible, and consequently any text from any part of it, used as a theme for pulpit discourse is regarded as carrying the gospel, and it is spoken of as being the gospel, while there may not be a single gospel sentence in it. It may be law with its claim and its penalty; it may be exhortation with its rallying and rousing considerations; it may be warning with its alarm and its rude awakening; it may be a call to righteousness of life and holiness of heart; it may be reproof, or remonstrance, or correction, or instruction in righteousness; it may be consolation, or inspiration, or the unveiling of the future. How wide a sweep it may take! How diverse it may be! And yet there may not ring in it a single gospel bell. On one occasion years ago I attended Sabbath evening service in a Scotch church. There was a large congregation present. The magnificent organ and a trained choir led the service of song, which was very fine. The minister entered gowned and hooded, led by his assistant and the

beadle, who carried a mace. The reading of the Scripture and the prayer was done by the assistant. And when the preacher gave out his text, it ran: "And when they had plaited a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head." At once I thought, a fine gospel text! He will tell us what the thorns are: how they came, and how they have been put away. What scope for the utterance of the most precious, soul-saving truth! But how astonished was I, when the young preacher began: "This text brings before us the empire of pain." And from that point to the close, there was not a gospel sentence in it. Socrates or Seneca or Epictetus might have been in the pulpit. There were no glad tidings of great joy for the large company assembled in that storied chamber. As the congregation dispersed I remarked to a dear friend who accompanied me, "The worst of all is, that it is not only a lost opportunity, but this large crowd of people will go away imagining that they have been listening to the gospel, where not a gospel word has been spoken.

The whole revelation of God is blessed truth, and may be termed "gospel" in an exceedingly loose and general sense: a sense that may often deceive poor souls. But what is meant by "gospel" in the New Testament, is *saving truth*, the

story of Christ's dying love and of God's great mercy, and of sin atoned for, and reconciliation made, and the kingdom of heaven opened to all believers. It is not a promise of forgiveness on account of our doing anything—it is rather the announcement that all is done, and that we are to rest satisfied with it as done for us. "This is the record—that God *hath given* to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

It is the revelation of the grace of God to sinful and sinning man. It is not, strictly speaking, duty, it is privilege—a blessing to receive; life in Christ Jesus, with nothing to pay. It is pardon of all sin through Jesus Christ, peace with God through Jesus Christ, salvation through Jesus Christ. The key word of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, "IN HIM," is the keyword of the gospel. It is the joyful message of deliverance for the prisoner, peace for the troubled, rest for the weary, cleansing for the polluted, joy for the disconsolate, hope for the despairing, light for the darkened and life for the dead, in Christ Jesus. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."

(5) The offer of salvation is sometimes exalted into an exceedingly conspicuous position, in which it is looked upon as the gospel, and takes the place even of the gospel itself. Now the offer of salvation to men is part of the gospel, but it is the consequence flowing from the grand gospel facts, rather than the facts themselves. It is the facts that bring the offer into existence and make it possible. And it is no unnecessary refinement to distinguish between the facts themselves and the offer of salvation to which they give rise: because we can easily conceive the offer extended and the reason of its being made hidden out of sight, and so the offer fail in producing any effect. We are reasonable beings. The laws of mind demand a clear setting forth of the ground of our action, so that it may be intelligent. The manner in which the offer arises is seen in our Lord's parabolic teaching, and this ought to be clearly kept in view in our dealing with men. They should never be separated. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder. The feast is spread, come!

The offer is sometimes by us made conditionally: "IF you believe there is salvation for you," which is perfectly true, but this is often said as if faith by its action created salvation—brought

it into existence, and that want of faith shows a non-existence of the provision of salvation. Now the provision of salvation is something entirely independent of faith. Christ died, the Just for the unjust, whether men believe it or not. It is now an unalterable fact. There it stands, in the love and mercy of God, true for ever, and unaffected by man's action. It is a fact, however, that mightily affects men. It is a stone that lifts their heads above the darkness and death of sin, when welcomed in a wholehearted way, or it is a stone that, being rejected, grinds them to powder. The provision is unquestionable; "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son," and the offer springs out of it, "that *whosoever believeth on him* should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When Dr. Thomas Guthrie of Edinburgh expounds 1 John 2:2—"He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world," he says: "This binds the earth as with a zone of mercy, and perish the hand which narrows it an hair's breadth." There is an universal provision underlying the universal offer. The offer is an authentic gospel offer. There is no deception about it. It is real as God is real, and true as God is true. "God the Fa-

ther as he is in his Son Jesus Christ, moved with nothing but with his free love to mankind lost, hath made a deed of gift and grant unto them all, that whosoever of them shall believe in this his Son, shall not perish, but have eternal life."

Dr. Thomas Chalmers in his "Institutes of Theology" observes: "God has made the salvation of the gospel universal in point of proposition, the fault is man's if it be not universal in point of effect. God hath made the Sun of Righteousness to arise with healing under his wings in sight of all the nations, though we may shut our eyes against it. He hath lifted up the widely-sounding call, though we may shut our ears against it. He hath made demonstration of unexpected goodwill to the species—the condemnation is ours if we do not look and do not listen to it."

Dr. A. A. Hodge in his "Outlines of Theology" says: "A *bona fide* offer of the gospel, therefore, is to be made to all men. 1. Because the satisfaction rendered to the law is sufficient for all men. 2. Because it is exactly adapted to the redemption of all. 3. Because God designs that whosoever exercises faith in Christ shall be saved by him.

"The design of Christ's death being to secure

the salvation of his own people, incidentally to the accomplishment of that end it comprehends the offer of that salvation freely and honestly to all men on condition of their faith. No man is lost for the want of an atonement, or because there is any other barrier in the way of his salvation than his own most free and wicked will," pp. 322, 323. Dr. Hodge here, after his clear setting forth of the *bona fide* nature of the free offer, reaches a fact which is often made a stone of stumbling. Why do men not believe? Some are very bold and very unscriptural, as they are ready to declare, "It is because they are reprobates. It is because they have not the Holy Spirit. It is because God does not touch them." Philosophically these positions may be held. But they all dishonor God. They run counter to the plain words of Christ in reference to this matter: "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Wherever philosophy might lead, it is enough for me that Christ has spoken, and no one can philosophize better than he, for his mind takes in more and his heart has greater love than that of any other man. These words of Christ ought to be an end of all controversy. And they can be supported by better reasons than any philosopher can produce. Christ said simply,

Man is himself to blame, not God. Man will not believe; he will not entertain the convincing evidence. As men of old resisted the Holy Spirit, so do they still. As they withstood warnings, exhortations, invitations, free offers, so do they still. And all the while God is asking this question: "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God; and not that he should return from his ways, and live?" "I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore turn yourselves and live ye." Christ weeping over Jerusalem expresses and illustrates to us God's feeling in respect to doomed men. His heart breaks over them. God does not force men to comply with his offer. He respects the constitution he has given him, and leaves him a free moral agent, a responsible being, a proper subject of moral government. To do otherwise were to destroy the foundations of virtue and vice, and overthrow righteousness which is the glory of God's throne. He reigns in righteousness, blessed be his holy name.

The Gospel of Christ, as the Word presents it, is what men need to satisfy the intellect, to pacify the conscience, and to give rest to the heart. It is something substantial, real, appre-

hensible; not merely an empty sound that falls on the ear, but the announcement of the divine truth, the great and glorious fact—"*Christ died for our sins.*"

The Gospel of Christ was in the hands of the apostles, as it has been in the hands of all earnest Christian workers, the truth that saves. "We preach Christ crucified . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God." 1 Cor. 1:23, 24. "Daily in the Temple and in every house (Peter and John) ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ." Acts 5:42. "They that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus and Antioch . . . preaching the Lord Jesus." Acts 2:19, 20. They never moved from that fact till men were saved; and when they proceeded farther it was to show Jesus made wisdom and sanctification and redemption to the believer—Jesus all and in all. The truth that saves is introductory to the truth that sanctifies. That opens the door wide upon all covenant blessings. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

We have drawn the line of distinction thus sharply between the gospel and what arises out

of it, because we deem it of first importance that it should be so drawn that we may know when saving truth is presented. It is not the offer, nor the invitation, nor anything springing out of the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation—but the gospel itself—"Christ died, the Just for the unjust." That is solid ground for the poor lost soul to stand upon.

V. PREPARATION FOR THE RECEPTION OF SAVING TRUTH.

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Zacharias, "while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course," to announce to him that his prayer was heard, and that Elizabeth his wife should bear a son, he added, "And thou shalt have joy and gladness : and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink ; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Was this work required then, and is it not required still? Is not the heart of man the same in all ages? The work of the Baptist, as the forerunner of Christ, is always needed. He went forth and aroused the people to a sense of their need. He called them to repentance. He spoke to them of the wrath to come. He shook them

till they were wide awake by proclaiming the truth like a prophet of the olden time, boldly, fearlessly, and with startling effect, so that there "went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea and all the regions round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan confessing their sins." This preparatory work is always required in order to a proper appreciation of the gospel. It is provided for in the first words Christ uttered, namely, "*Repent ye.*" That is John the Baptist's word, and marks the preparation needed to fit one for the reception of the gospel. It strikes directly at the evil life men are living. It calls for a change in them—a great change—a change of thought and feeling and action with regard to God. It is the summing up of the Old Testament statement in two words: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon." Isa. 55:7. This lays a strain upon the man, that brings him to a realization of his own sinfulness, and guiltiness before God. It discovers to him the chains that bind him, the multitude of his transgressions that hold him like cords, the depth of the stain of evil that has been sinking, sinking, like the

repeated washes of the water colorist, into his soul, so that the color has become part of himself. It unveils to his eye the distance in which he stands from God, and it may lead him to cry, "Oh, wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It brings the conviction of sin home to a man, and fits him to see in Christ Jesus what he could not otherwise see. It is only the sick man who values the skill of a physician. So our Lord said to the Pharisees: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick . . . I am not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Matt. 9 : 12, 13.

This call to repentance causes men to come to the knowledge of their unrighteousness, without which, there is for men no form nor comeliness, nor beauty in Christ that they should desire him. Our old divines made much of law work, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, and without that, no one will seek salvation. This has fallen largely into the background to-day, along with the conditions of the impenitent lost. All the terrific statements of Christ touching "hell," and "the furnace of fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," and "everlasting punishment," are, if not denied, so heavily dis-

counted, that they seldom come into view. They are uttered with bated breath lest offence should be given, when they are referred to. But that is so seldom that it counts for nothing. No marvel that to-day we hear of so few broken hearts! The truth of God is not presented in its fulness. It is emasculated. It is nerveless. It no longer clutches the conscience and shakes the soul with the terror of the Lord. And this fact is so patent that even godless men make note of it. A member of the Supreme Court at Washington, though not a professed Christian, yet a thoughtful man, expressed himself to a pastor, making use of this remarkable statement: "You ministers are making a fatal mistake in not holding forth before men as prominently as the previous generation did, the retributive justice of God. You have fallen into a sentimental style of rhapsodizing over the love of God, and you are not appealing to that fear of future punishment which our Lord and Master made such a prominent element in his preaching. And we are seeing the effect of it in the widespread demoralization of private virtue and corruption of public conscience through the land." This witness is true.

A study of our Lord's dealing with the young ruler shows us the need of preparation in order

to the receiving of God's free grace. He took special pains to introduce him to himself. "Why callest thou me good? There is none good, but One, that is God," was intended to lift up the young man's mind to the infinite disparity between himself and God. How could he do a good thing in presence of God's infinite holiness?

"Keep the commandments," was another help to the understanding of himself, for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." In that mirror the man sees himself. Our Lord was a true gospel preacher and he used the law as a revealer. "Go sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." This was another stroke at the idol set up in the young man's heart, intended to turn his eyes full on it that he might see the chain that bound him. But alas he did not! Here is a chapter in wise preparatory treatment, and a chapter too, which shows that even the greatest wisdom and skill and love are not always successful. It is as Solomon in his proverb declares: "A full soul loatheth an honey-comb; but to the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet." As it is the drowning man who rejoices in being rescued from death, and the leper from the unspeakable misery of his living death,

so it is the sinner condemned by the law on whom the pains of hell take hold, so that he finds trouble and sorrow, who is ready to flee to Christ for salvation from the curse that rests upon him. This fitness there must be, if Christ is to be desired, or sought unto, or accepted. It was when the prodigal "came to himself" that he said, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants."

The consciousness of sin is there, and it is deep enough to make acknowledgement of being unworthy of sonship, and of a willingness to take the lowly place of a menial. Anything, anything to be in the Father's house. What a mighty preparation is a true sense of sin for the exercise of faith! It seems to bring the soul to the point of being ready to grasp at anything that offers help, that shows a way of escape or a means of deliverance. How true those verses of the familiar hymn are,

> "All the fitness He requireth
> Is to feel your need of him."

But to-day this is sadly wanting—a sense of sin, a realization of the need of salvation. The deep

and protracted exercises of heart and conscience that characterized conversion in former generations are seldom heard of to-day. We have an easier mode of conversion. It has in it no pain, no trouble, no sorrow. And there being no sense of condemnation in the soul, there are no great joys when Christ is accepted; and more, no humble, lowly life when he is followed, and no sense of entire dependence. Christ is taken hold upon by a weak hand, and is weakly held and indifferently honored. The strong figurative expressions in reference to the believer's relation to the Lord are feebly apprehended and imperfectly understood. The heart does not go sweeping into them, like the incoming tide of the sea into every estuary and inlet and bay along the coast. "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "The church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood."

These Scriptures have no depth of meaning to one who has had no deep sense of sin, and who has not felt the burden of guilt and the terrors of the Lord, and therefore little seems to have

been forgiven. And our Lord declares, "to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

The mistake that is being made to-day is in endeavoring to simplify the truth, and in doing that to leave out a large and necessary portion of it—that which insists on the lost condition of man, that which presses hard on his sinfulness, his enmity to God, his rebellion against God, his being under the curse, his being a child of wrath going to hell, unless he repent and turn to the Lord. All that really shows the necessity for a Saviour. If men do not come to the knowledge of their sins how shall they ever desire a Saviour? If men do not realize that they are going to hell, how shall they ever seek to go to heaven? If they know not that they are lost, how shall they ever care about being found? Great damage is done to souls by our simplifying or sweetening the truth which the Holy Spirit uses for the conviction of sin. It should be used just as it is, in all its fulness, in its breadth and height and length and depth. "*Preach the word*" is the commission of the Lord to his laborers in his vineyard. Omit no part of it. What was the occasion of the wonderful revival at Northampton under Jonathan Edwards? It was the preaching of the sermon entitled, "Sinners in the Hands of

an Angry God," the text being Deut. 32 : 35, "Their foot shall slide in due time." It is such a sermon as would be expected from the greatest theologian and philosopher of his day. Its chief theme is, "There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell but the mere pleasure of God." This is supported by argument taken from Scripture ; it is driven home on the hearts of those who are listening without fear or favor. These are its closing sentences, and they give us a taste of the discourse : "How dreadful is the state of those that are daily and hourly in danger of this great wrath and infinite misery ! But this is the dismal case of every soul in this congregation that has not been born again, however moral and strict, sober and religious they may otherwise be. Oh, that you would consider it, whether you be young or old ! There is reason to think that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape.

If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be the subject of this misery, what an awful thing it would be to think of! If we knew who it was, what an awful sight it would be to see such a person! How might all the rest of the congregation lift up a lamentable and bitter cry over him! But, alas! instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell! And it would be a wonder if some that are now present should not be in hell in a very short time, before this year is out! And it would be no wonder if some persons that now sit here in some seats of this meeting-house in health, and quiet and serene, should be there before to-morrow morning!" This is the note needed to-day to stir men's blood. It is a breath of the ozone from the sun-smitten prairies of God's word. When William Berridge, of Everton in England, by his example and work had raised up bands of itinerating preachers, he gave them some necessary instructions, one of which was this: "When you state your commission, begin with laying open the innumerable corruptions of the hearts of your audience: Moses will lend you a knife that may be often whetted at his grindstone. Lay open the universal sinfulness of nature, the

darkness of the mind, the frowardness of the will, the fretfulness of the temper, and the earthliness and sensuality of the affections. Speak of the evil of sin in its nature, etc. Declare the evil of sin in its effects, etc. Lay open the spirituality of the law and its extent, reaching to every thought, word, and action, and declaring every transgression (whether of omission or commission) deserving of death. When your hearers are deeply affected with these things (which is seen by the hanging down of their heads) preach Christ. Lay open the Saviour's almighty power to soften the hard heart and give it repentance—to bring pardon to the broken heart, a spirit of prayer to the prayerless heart, holiness to the filthy heart, and faith to the unbelieving heart. Let them know all the treasures of grace that are lodged in Jesus Christ for the use of the poor needy sinner, and that He is full of love as well as power—turns no beggar from his gate, but receives all kindly—loves to bless them."

That is a direction wrought out of a notable experience which he had himself had. Dr. James W. Alexander of New York, writing of the great awakening there in 1858, says in his paper entitled "Varieties of Anxious Enquiry," "The law of God applied to the mind and conscience,

is that which works conviction. Hence the preaching of the law precedes the preaching of the gospel, and is indispensable. Views of the infinite justice of God are never wanting in sound convictions, although as to accessories and degree these views may differ." In the revival which took place in Camberlang in Scotland in 1743, this is said of it: "This work has been begun and carried on under the influence of the great and substantial doctrines of Christianity, pressing jointly the necessity of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and of holiness in all manner of conversation." In every work that has enlarged the borders of Zion with quickened souls, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, the whole truth has been used. There has been no healing slightly the hurt of the daughter of God's people, saying, Peace! peace! when there was no peace. The emptying process took place in order to being able to entertain Christ. The wretchedness of the former state, as slaves in Satan's sway, was manifested, that Jesus might be sought unto for peace and power and salvation. That is God's process: "I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal." Deut. 32:39.

John Wesley, that eminent servant of God, being once requested to address a gathering of

distinguished persons, chose for his text, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" Matt. 3 : 7. The noblemen and gentlemen present were highly offended, and one of them on leaving the place, said to the great preacher : "That sermon was only fit for Newgate Gaol." "No," said the fearless Wesley, "there my text would have been, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.'" John 1 : 29. What a keen sense Wesley had of the divine fitness of things! To the bruised and broken-hearted he would preach the gospel, while to those living in carnal security he would address the rousing, awakening, alarming word. May all Christian workers have such wisdom!

Dr. Nettleton in his evangelistic work, when impressions were made, usually advised the individuals to retire with stillness, and go directly to their closets. He wanted to arouse the sense of sinfulness in them that Christ might be more truly a Saviour to them. He had no confidence, we are told, in those revivals which dispense with law work. He did not suppose the work of conviction need be of long continuance, but it was a pre-requisite to the seeing anything attractive in Christ as a Saviour. Haste at this point makes

scamped work. Brownlow North was faithful here too, being desirous of doing solid work. See his treatment of a lady to whom he said, "Madam, are you willing to give up the world for Christ?"

To carry the gospel to souls not convicted of sin, with no sense of their danger, with no desire for deliverance, with no hunger after eternal life, is to do a profitless work. We are beginning at the wrong end. Our words have no meaning. It is like speaking of colors to a blind man, of water to a man who has never known thirst, of bread to a man who has never been hungry. There is nothing in the heart to respond. The preparation of the heart is not there. And while professions may be made through the touch of excitement, or sympathy with others doing the like act, the professions are worthless, because there has not been experienced what is implied in the words "When he came to himself." We need not marvel that all such, while in the church, are like dead, leafless branches on the tree.

As John the Baptist came that he might by his preaching of repentance "make ready a people prepared for the Lord," so we need to observe this order as that in which God sets us the example, and which is confirmed by every sound and enduring work since that time.

VI. THE TRUTH MADE EFFECTUAL TO SALVATION.

A MEDICINE may be a specific for a certain disease, but if it is not used, it cannot be expected to put forth its healing virtue, and remove the disease, and restore to health and strength. There must be an application of the remedy to the sick one. It must be brought into contact with the disease. It must be honestly and faithfully used, and that, in the very way the physician directs. So it is with the remedy God has provided. It is to be received, not simply in the word which exhibits it, but in the person who embodies it. Whenever we think of the gospel we must consider *what* it says, and of *whom* it says it. To rest in the *what* and not reach the *whom* is to fail entirely. It is like getting a physician's recipe, and never having it made up and administered.

It is a possible thing to hear the gospel story and to be delighted with it intellectually, and to rest content with the mere intellectual assent to it, and imagine that that is all that is needed, and so fall short of God's purpose in giving us the gospel. Now, we must have this intellectual

conception, and assent, but we must at the same time have more. Our faith must go deeper; it must not skim the surface, like a swallow flying over a lake, it must be like the kingfisher which dives deep for its prey—we must have that to which the intellectual conception leads, namely, the heart-grip. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Many rest content with what they suppose to be an understanding of the truth, that is, an intellectual apprehension of it. But such an understanding is very imperfect, very superficial, very unsatisfying; we must go beyond that, and allow our spiritual nature to come into play. The intellect perceives the truth written; the spiritual nature embraces the truth incarnate. The one apprehends the story about the Saviour, the other apprehends the Saviour himself. We are not saved by a proposition; we are saved by a person. We must therefore not fall short of the living person. It is not by believing something about him that we are saved, but by believing *on* himself. "Believe *on* the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." It is not the person of Christ barely considered, but as clothed upon with the righteousness qualifying him to be

a mediator, a Saviour. It is Christ Jesus in the completeness of his mediatorial character, as "the Lord Jesus Christ"—our prophet, priest and king; who "died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." Christ as he is offered to us in the gospel. Christ as God's sacrificial Lamb who taketh away the sin of the world. Christ as God's gift to lost sinners. Christ as our kinsman redeemer. Christ as our Saviour.

When William H. Hewitson, the saintly minister of Direlton in Scotland, was nearing his end, a friend sat by him quoting texts illustrative of God's faithfulness. After his friend had withdrawn, he remarked, "texts like these do not give me so much comfort as—'God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;' or—'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?' Plain doctrinal statements exhibiting the heart of God, are more sustaining to me than mere promises. I like to get into contact with the living person." That which Hewitson liked and longed for, each poor sinner must have, *con-*

tact with the living Saviour. It was when the woman with the issue of blood touched Christ that she was healed. (Luke 8.) It was when the blind eyes were brought into contact with Christ that sight was restored. (Mark 8.) It was when the leper, who was a mass of corruption and was slowly but surely dying on his feet, came to Christ and was touched by him, that new life was given, and his flesh came again as a little child's, fresh, pure, sweet and beautiful. (Mark 1.) It was when Christ touched the bier on which the widow of Nain's son was being borne to the grave, and Christ's word went forth, that he arose and was restored to his mother. (Luke 7.)

Contact with Christ is what sinners need to give them salvation. And the truth about Christ is given to lead up to Christ, and to bring us to cast ourselves upon him unreservedly. And we do that by faith. That is, the spirit of man goes out unto, and embraces the spiritually present Christ: commits itself to him with entire surrender: keeps nothing back. Does what Paul enjoins in Rom. 12:1, "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

No one who reads attentively the New Testa-

ment will imagine that faith is a simple act. To-day we hear much of the simple gospel, simple faith, and so forth. We have, we fear, too many "*simples.*" We have so sought to make everything easy, that the grandeur and sublimity have passed away from God's truth, as the glory of a day-dawn among the Alps passes away toward noon.

In the New Testament we have different kinds of faith exemplified. And these are all put into the record as beacons of warning to anxious souls, to save them from everlasting destruction.

(1) There we have one named as a believer—for the record takes each man at his own estimate of himself, and allows events to tell the truth in the case—Simon Magus; who beforetime used sorcery and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." When he saw the people believing, he believed also, and was baptized; and continued with Philip seeing the miracles and signs that were done. And seeing also Peter, by prayer and the laying on of hands, impart the Holy Ghost—his whole character was called forth into the light. He offered them money, saying, "Give

me also the power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." But Peter said unto him, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent, therefore, of this wickedness; and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee: for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Acts ch. 8. What kind of faith is this? It is not a saving faith. It is a faith professed for selfish ends. Simon wished to do a good stroke of business. We may call it a commercial faith. It did not reach out beyond himself notwithstanding his baptism and his continuing with Philip and Peter and John. All he heard did not penetrate the darkness of his mind, or quicken the deadness of his heart. How hard it is to help a purely selfish man who seeks only selfish ends!

(2) Our Lord in his parable of the sower gives us two instances of other kinds of faith in the Word. Both at first seem fair. They go on for a time prosperously, but they do not endure unto the end. They both fail, though it be through different causes. One fails through lack

of depth, the other because of the strength of antagonistic forces. This is the record : "These are they which are sown on stony ground ; who when they have heard the Word, immediately receive it with gladness, and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time; afterwards, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the Word's sake, immediately they are offended. And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the Word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word and it becometh unfruitful." A superficial faith is a powerless faith. A weak faith is overborne and does not conquer. A true, saving faith is armed with divine might. It is a grandly victorious faith. Its life is not dried up by the scorching heat, nor drawn away by the strength of other interests. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." Faith is the victory, because it takes hold upon the mighty God of Jacob. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God!"

(3) James, in his Epistle, marks another kind of faith that is not saving. That is belief in the existence of God. "Thou believest there is one

God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble." Faith in God, that awakens no sense of the sin in one's own soul and of the infinite distance between the sinning man and the Holy God, and therefore no sense of the need of a mediator, is an exceedingly imperfect faith. It does not go deep down into the soul. It affects the evil spirit more deeply—"the devils believe, and tremble," but while terror seizes upon them, they do not repent, they do not seek mercy, they do not turn to God's Son. They are held fast by the cords of their sins, "and tremble," horror springing up at the thought of God.

(4) Another kind of faith is dealt with by James in his Epistle, which we may call dead faith. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man *say* he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it have not works, is dead being alone. As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

How many only "*say*" that they have faith!

It is a mere profession of faith. An empty profession, that has neither reality nor life in it! This James calls "*a dead faith.*" How tremendously deceitful such a faith is! It is a delusion that destroys the soul. It it this that our Lord speaks so strongly against, and paints a picture over, to impress it powerfully on the imagination. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord! Lord! shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Then what a disclosure he makes: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon

that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it." Matt. 7:21–27. Marked off from all other exercises of faith is the faith that is saving. *What are its characteristics?*

1st. As to its Object. Christ Jesus in his sacrificial character is the alone object of saving faith. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Christ is the object, the one object of saving faith. Sometimes other objects are looked at, such as the mercy of God. But there is no mercy for man save in, and through, Jesus Christ. Sometimes it is the Promises of God. But all the promises are yea and amen in Christ. They come to us in Him and through Him.

Sometimes it is the Word of God. But Christ is the incarnate Word, and all the written word finds its fulfilment in Him. After his resurrection Christ said to his disciples, "These are the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets and in the psalms concerning me."

Sometimes it is pardon, or peace, or power, or some other benefit Christ bestows, that is proposed to our faith as an object, but these are

all secondary and subsidiary—Christ Jesus alone, is the one Supreme Object of saving faith ; and he is held up before us as the brazen serpent was in the wilderness, in his death for sin ; "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

2d. As to the Act of faith itself. It is not an act limited to the intellect. It engages alike the intellect and the heart. It goes into the depths of the nature. It is an act of the complete man. Philip said to the Eunuch when he asked him : "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" "If thou believest with *all thine heart* thou mayest?" Philip had been telling the Eunuch about Jesus as the Lamb God provided for the sacrifice ; and so the Eunuch replied, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." He therefore accepted Christ in his divine character as making atonement for sin.

Saving faith is trusting in Christ alone, and with all our heart : the mind, the will, the heart consenting together in accepting him. It is giving ourselves up to him without reserve, as we do in respect to a physician when we are seriously ill. It is relying upon him as our righteousness before God. He is the End (or the fulfilment) of the law for righteousness to every one

that believeth. He is the Lord our righteousness. In him God is well pleased, and therefore all who trust in him—hide in him as their City of Refuge—are well-pleasing to God. He looks upon them in the face of his Anointed: and for his sake pardons their sins and accepts their persons, and bestows upon them the gift of eternal life. Faith unites the soul to Christ. How variously it is represented! Faith is the *eye* of the soul, so it looks upon Christ with full gaze. Faith is the *arm* of the soul, so it embraces Christ as its own. Faith is the *hand* of the soul, so it receives Christ as God's free gift. Faith is the *mouth* of the soul, so it feeds upon Christ as the bread from heaven. Faith is the *foot* of the soul, so it comes to Christ for life. Faith is the bond of union between Christ and the soul—"Faith in his blood." Rom. 3:25. His sacrificial character is always at the front.

Faith that is saving always respects Christ Jesus as its Chief Object. So our Lord repeatedly declared to those who came to him in their trouble and sickness, "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." The truth is made effectual unto salvation by a whole-hearted faith. A faith that sweeps into the depths of the soul engaging the affections and the will in a complete surrender to

Christ. Thus Horatius Bonar sings his own experience :

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto me and rest:
Lay down, thou weary one. lay down
Thy head upon my breast!'
I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary and worn and sad,
I found in him a resting-place
And he has made me glad.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold, I freely give
The living water: thirsty one,
Stoop down and drink and live!'
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream:
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him."

Faith that is heart-deep never fails. Appropriating Christ Jesus as the gospel presents him, brings into the heart pardon and peace. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1. To sum up all that may be said on this head, nothing clearer or more pointed can be found than what is said in a venerable book—not so well known or as much thought of to-day as its merits entitle it to—in answer to the question, What is faith in Jesus Christ? "Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel."

VII. HOW TO PRESENT THE GOSPEL.

We cannot over-estimate the value of a proper presentation of the gospel. This is often half the battle; in many cases, much more. All gifts are greatly enhanced in value by the mode of conveying them—not intrinsically, but to the appreciative sense of the recipient. And so it is with the greatest of all gifts—the unspeakable gift of God. How great pains should be taken, therefore, so to bring the good news before the mind as that it shall be attractive and desirable. McCheyne must needs have beaten oil for the sanctuary. The best powers of the best men are needed for this the greatest of all works, the work of the gospel ministry.

"'T is not a cause of small import
The pastor's care demands,
But what might fill an angel's heart,
And filled a Saviour's hands."

The saving truth of the gospel ought to be presented

I. INTELLIGENTLY, as coming from an understanding heart and fitted for one. The understanding is the avenue of approach to the heart,

and to gain that the hearer must understand. There is no reasonable hope for him till he does understand. Hence Philip asked the Ethiopian eunuch, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" He evidently did not understand, so the evangelist opened his mouth and began at the Scripture the eunuch read, and preached unto him Jesus. For the same reason our Lord puts special emphasis on understanding. He asked his disciples who had heard many of his parables, "Have ye understood all these things?" And speaking of the parable of the sower, he makes this twofold reference to the understanding of the truth: "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and *understandeth it not*, then cometh the wicked one and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside." "He which received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word and *understandeth it;* which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." It was a special grace shown to the apostles after the resurrection: "Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures."

The gospel ought to issue forth from the speaker's mind as a pencil of light, armed with a pene-

trative force, as something apprehended and as something apprehensible. It ought to be made to stand up before the mind as an Egyptian pyramid or a great Alps, which being once seen will never be forgotten. Wherever else there is mist or haze there ought to be none here. In the deep things of God the preacher may grope his way sometimes, owing to imperfect experience or broken knowledge—for he walks confidently only so far as he knows, that is, has spiritual experience; but here it never ought to be so. He has accepted Christ, and he knows on what ground; he is acquainted with the difficulties attending that acceptance, and he knows its blessed results. This is a province of knowledge and experience all his own, and in this he has what places him at an immense advantage in the intelligent presentation of the truth.

The Rev. Andrew H. Bonar says in reference to this: "Surely in going forth to speak for God a man may well be overawed! Surely in putting forth his hand to sow the seed of the kingdom a man may even tremble! And surely we should aim at nothing else than to pour forth the truth upon our people through the channel of our own living and deeply-affected souls." It is not to be hearsay. We are witnesses, and no court ad-

mits a witness to give hearsay evidence. We must tell what we ourselves know. That is what John does in his first epistle, 1:1–4: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life (for the life was manifested and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested unto us); that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you that your joy may be full."

We have read of an earnest young preacher, who on his first going out from the theological seminary to his life-work, felt the need, both for the repose of his own heart and for the success of the ministry to which he believed he was called, of something beyond all that he had found in a course of systematic theology. Among other methods of satisfying himself, he was in the habit of conversing with experienced Christians as to the ground and nature of their faith. Meeting with an aged woman, in humble station but of a gracious spirit, he asked her, "What is the gos-

pel you believe, and how do you believe it?" She replied, "*God is satisfied with his Son*—that is the gospel I believe; and *I am satisfied with him too*—that is how I believe it." Experience of the truth is the mighty leverage every heaven-called minister has in the proclamation of the gospel. He, like Paul, knows whom he believes. It must be remembered that conviction is sought, immediate conviction, strong and effectual conviction, to lead the soul to turn from wickedness to God. And therefore the intelligence springing from the love of the heart—for all our intellectual action is moral at the base—the light of the mind, the power of the imagination and the force of the will; in fine, the concurrence of the whole being is demanded. The entire man must utter himself in the truth preached; else many will listen as Tennyson's Northern Farmer did:

"And I hallus comed to 's choorch afoor my Sally wur dead,
And 'eerd 'im a hummin' away loike a buzzard-clock ower my yead,
An' I niver know'd what a mean'd, but I thowt a a'd summut to say,
An' I thowt a said what a owt to 'a' said—an' then I comed away."

They will go to church and come away untouched and uninstructed, believing only that the minister had something to say to fill up his measure of

duty, but which, alas, was nothing of any particular interest to them! Beloved, we have the salvation of souls in hand, and that ought to inspire us with a high and holy ambition to make the cross tower to heaven, and stretch its arms athwart the earth and fill it with redeeming light and love.

II. LARGELY. By that I mean with rich variety. It has many sides, many heights and many depths. It has vast logical statements for the understanding. It has glowing warmth for the affections of the heart. It has a righteousness that commends it to the conscience. It has incisive appeals for the practical spirit. It has, therefore, large and consecrated media through which it may come to men. There are the altar forms of the Old Testament and the cross forms of the New Testament. There are the parabolic pictures our Lord has painted, and the strongly legal presentation of his apostle Paul, and the paternal and judicial relations of God to men—each of which is pregnant with power in the presentation of it.

Here let me insert the outline of a sermon of Thomas Boston, the author of "The Fourfold State," and much else worth studying if one will. The text is "*Who hath believed our report, etc.*"

"(1) The gospel is a report from heaven of salvation for poor sinners, from sin and the wrath of God. (2) The gospel is the report of the crucified Christ made over to sinners, as the device of heaven for their salvation. (3) The gospel is the report of a righteousness wherein guilty ones may stand before a Holy God. (4) The gospel is the report of pardon, under the great seal of heaven, in Christ, to all who will take it in him. (5) The gospel is the report of a Physician who cures all the diseases of the soul infallibly and freely, and respects no patients. (6) The gospel is the report of a feast for hungry souls, to which all are bid welcome, Christ himself being the matter and the maker of it too. (7) The gospel is the report of a treasure. In it are the precious promises, within them precious Christ with his merit, like the gold mentioned in Rev. 3 : 18. (8) The gospel is the report of a victory won by Christ Jesus over sin, Satan, death and all the world, and that in favor of all that will join in with the glorious Conqueror. To name no more—the gospel is the report of a peace purchased by the blood of Christ for poor sinners and offered to them." That is a specimen of rich variety in a sermon. It is rich enough to form a course of sermons. And it has this noticeable fact, that

amid its variety there is no losing sight of the gospel fact, that always stands forth clearly and conspicuously. It is refeshing to observe this. It does not get covered over and hidden out of sight under any figurative representation. These rather help it to shine out in attractive guise.

It has adaptations to every condition in which man may be found. There are the fallen, the degraded, the hopeless, the weary, the wandering, the hardened, the proud, the selfish, the lost. Every class whatever may be its character may be met by a skilled workman of the Lord. The Christian worker must always consider with whom he deals—the character, life, tendencies, temptations, position, mental and moral condition of the person—if he would speed. If he have not large and trustworthy intuitions, he must have wide experience, so that he may not always draw the bow at a venture. That must be done sometimes, but not always. Else to what purpose are our human sympathies and knowledge, our pastoral visitations and services, and our intimate human brotherhood? It is said of Luther that he spoke as if he had been inside a man, so thoroughly did he know how to address his different states and moods. Tyndal, the early English reformer, says at the close of his sermon on justi-

fying faith: "Because terms be dark to them that be not expert and exercised, we always set out our meaning with clear examples, reporting ourselves to the hearts and consciences of all men." Did not our Lord himself set all his ministers an example of the first order in respect to the use of figures and illustrations in making the truth at once simple and beautiful and attractive? His employment of the word "*like*" opens the door wide to the use of all kinds of metaphorical and figurative expression. He paints pictures so largely himself that the four gospels are four grand picture galleries filled with the very best. Time is never lost spent in study there! Paul became all things to all men, that he might save some. A study of the addresses of the apostles to different audiences at Rome, Athens, Jerusalem, Corinth, Ephesus, and other places, to the religious Jews and the heathen Gentiles, will aid the minister much in a large and various presentation of his message. We are not left in darkness as to the mode of dealing with different classes. The gospel went all the way from Jerusalem to Rome, and in its course touched all classes and characters, and illumined and converted and saved all classes. Few new questions arise now, in addition to what were broached

then. We may get them at new angles, or in new relations, but they are the old questions dressed over again in fantastic garb, and strutting upon the stage with new life. Solomon's word is confirmed in every age: "There is no new thing under the sun." In the Memoir of David Maclagan, by Dr. Norman L. Walker, we meet with this seed thought in reference to the point in hand: "I met David McLaren to-day, who told me that he was asked by a minister the other day what, in his opinion, was the best way of meeting *modern doubt.* He replied, that he did not think modern doubt was materially different from *ancient doubt,* and that he thought the old recipe of preaching Jesus Christ and him crucified would be found now, as then, the most efficient antidote."

This is a point of so great importance and one in which ministers fail, more, perhaps, than any other, that we cannot but quote the wise and memorable words of Henry Ward Beecher, in his first series of Lectures on Preaching, delivered to the students of Yale College: "Now in order to reach and help the varying phases of your congregation, you must take human nature as you find it, in its broad range. Understand this, the same law which led the apostle to make himself

a Greek to the Greeks, and a Jew to the Jews, and to put himself under the law with those who were under the law; and that everlasting good sense of conformity in these things, for the sake of taking hold of men where they can be reached, and lifting them up, requires you to study human nature as it is, and not as people tell you it ought to be. If a man can be saved by pure intellectual preaching, let him have it. If others require a predominance of emotion, provide that for them. If by others the truth is taken more easily through the imagination, give it to them in the form of imagination. If there are still others who demand it in the form of facts and rules, see that they have it in that form. Take men as it has pleased God to make them; and let your preaching, so far as concerns the selection of material, and the mode and method by which you are presenting the truth, follow the wants of the persons themselves, and not simply the measure of your own minds." "You are not practised workmen until you understand human nature, and know how to touch it with divine truth—until you comprehend the divine truth in so many of its bearings upon the human soul, that you can work with tolerable facility from the truth that is in Jesus to that which is in man, and

quite as often can reverse the process. That is the study." How strongly this commends itself to our judgment! But how hard it is to reduce to practice! It calls for pains and prayer.

III. LOVINGLY—under the impulse of its own blessed charity. Love in the heart, with its tender sympathy, its great compassion, its wise considerateness, is the grand force for throwing the arrow of the truth into other hearts. There is nothing comparable to it. It stands peerless in its power. Mr. D. L. Moody in one of his meetings in Edinburgh, speaking to young men, said that he wanted love in speaking to them, for he had noticed God used him most when he was most filled with the spirit of love to souls and to Christ, and he implored them to plead that he might have that spirit.

The Rev. John Macpherson in giving the secret of the success of Duncan Matheson in soul-winning, says: "The right side of the ship where the great draft of fishes is to be got, is simple unquestioning, childlike faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Was this then the great secret of his success in winning souls? I think not. Was it intellectual gifts? No. Many possess larger endowments of mind who are less successful. Was it his ready utterance or force of speech? No. Many are

more eloquent, with fewer and meaner results. Was it the holy consistency of his life? No. Many saintlier men are less useful. All these things, especially his prayerfulness and faith, doubtless contributed to his success in the Lord's work; but THE GREAT SECRET, I firmly believe, lay in *his intense, self-denying love of souls. God always blesses love.*"

Robert Murray McCheyne was exceedingly tender in his spirit. And the more awful the subject the more it dealt with the severe aspects of the divine character and action the more tender he became. He was awed by the contemplation of the matter into a loving sympathy with his fellow-men, and spake words that won the heart. There was no repulsive hardness in him or about him; all was love. This, with his extensive and clear biblical knowledge, was the secret of his success. W. C. Burns, the apostolic missionary, writes in his Diary: "I was compelled by my mother to beware of harsh expressions in preaching and prayer, and told by J. that she thought there was danger in my losing the former sweetness, as she said, of my manner in preaching, for an unpleasant sternness. I thanked the Lord for this counsel, and was told by her afterwards that I had been enabled to correct the fault."

One may, by the very desire of making the truth impressive, become harsh, and in his intense earnestness, look fierce. Anxiety to save the hearer causes one to lose sight of what seem minor matters, but which after all are not minor, because they make deep and lasting impressions. We, therefore, ought to be careful in every look, motion, accent, lest offence be given where we desire to draw and win. To attend to these might seem to be exceedingly oppressive, but we can easily do so by keeping ourselves in the love of God. If our spirit is sweet, all its manifestations will be. Realizing the value of the soul will melt the soul with love. Jesus, who knew its preciousness, wept in view of its loss. What can be compared with it! Matthew Henry was wont to say, "I should think it a greater happiness to gain one soul to the Lord Jesus Christ than mountains of silver and gold to myself." In 1704 John Howe, preaching from Luke 21st, was heard by the great commentator, and at the close of the sermon "he said," says Mr. Henry, "*what I shall never forget.* 'I would deal for your souls as for my own, and for myself I declare before you all, I depend purely upon the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life.'"

How sweetly and strongly love breathes through all these utterances! It transmutes them into the gold of the heavenly city! It makes them living founts of inspiration for all Christian workers. There is a mighty power in love. It is girded with sweetest attractions, benignest influences and most convincing forces. Love is also very suggestive. It is fruitful as the vine. Puritan Brooks saith: "He that loves cannot be barren."

Love will clothe the subject in the most attractive attire. "A word fitly spoken—and love always speaks fitly—is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." As Solomon sought out acceptable words so must the gospel minister. How much of meaning a word sometimes carries beyond that which it bears as a current coin! It may bring back the music of the early home, the scent of the bean fields or hawthorn hedges, the view of the dear countryside where life was all a sweet dream and hope dashed the wide outlook with glory. It may touch the deepest in us, awakening the memories of a mother's love or of a father's faithfulness. It may quicken a dead soul and cause it to rise up and go forth in paths of righteousness. A beautiful story is told of the late M. Gustave Doré. He was engaged in paint-

ing the face of Christ in one of his pictures, when a lady friend of his came into his studio and began gazing most intently at the face almost completed. As she was gazing the artist retired from the picture to one corner of the room, and looked at his friend's face as she looked at the face on the picture. Turning round she said, "M. Doré, why do you look at me so anxiously?" "I wanted to watch," he replied, "the impression that face produced on you—and I think you like it?" "Yes, I do," she said, "and do you know that I was thinking that you could not paint such a face of Christ unless you loved him?" "Unless I loved him," replied Doré, "well, I trust I do, most sincerely: but as I love him more, I shall paint him better." So is it with the preacher as well as the painter. The more we love the Lord the better we shall picture him to the poor lost sinner. Oh, for more love to Him! deeper, mightier, more unselfish love to Him! We can join hearts with Mrs. Prentiss, the daughter of the sainted Payson:

"More love to thee, O Christ,
More love to thee!
Hear thou the prayer I make
On bended knee;
This is my earnest plea:
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee."

No fitter prayer than this could we offer, and that at all times, daily through the livelong year, morning, noon, and night.

IV. LIVINGLY. He should speak it from the heart; with all the warmth, tenderness, strong yet subdued feeling that it awakens. He should be under its power, appreciating its tremendous issues, realizing the immense meaning of its words, and evidently blessed by its merciful communications. How much assurance it will give to the heart! How marvellously it will enrich the soul! How grandly it will ennoble and even glorify the life! If any one should be a living epistle, surely it is the minister of the truth. He above all others should show forth the praises of God, in his enjoying in his own spirit the truth that brings peace to the conscience and rest to the soul, and a mighty inflow of strength to the whole nature. The command is, "Lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and cry aloud," and that implies health, sound health, and strength, and resolution, and vigorous action. The apostles were bold and fearless in the proclamation of the truth. They spoke with an intense earnestness that arrested attention and made men listen. They were not cold, nor heartless, nor indifferent, but the very opposite—they felt the thrill of the

truth through their whole being. Faith awakens feeling—it is like the fire beneath the boiler that changes the cold, dead water into the mighty force of steam which drives the complex machinery of the manufactory and makes a thousand spindles whirl. Often the minister may feel so intensely and speak so forcefully that he may be accounted mad. Paul was regarded as "beside himself." Richard Baxter

> "Preached as never sure to preach again,
> And as a dying man to dying men."

Frederick Robertson observes with keen insight: "It is not a minister's wisdom, but his conviction which imparts itself to others. Nothing gives life but life. Real flame kindles other flame." This may be proven any day. A servant girl in a house where Murray McCheyne once stayed, described him as "deein' to hae folk converted." A minister in the North was so impressed with his daily life of holiness that he said, "He is the most Jesus-like man I ever met with," and went to his room to weep. What an influence he exerted! How true it is, "the transcript of the heart hath the greatest force on the hearts of others."

Explorers in the arctic regions have made burning-glasses of bits of ice. These collected

the rays of the sun into a focus and kindled the wood on which they fell, while the fingers that held them were frozen by them. The storied window of the cathedral sheds light of variegated hues upon the worshippers, quickening them and cheering them and blessing them, while it remains cold and unblessed. But ministers of the gospel are not, cannot be, like cathedral window or ice-made burning-glass—they must have hearts of love to lead them to speak. They must believe and therefore speak. As one of our old Puritans declares: "Men of no resolution or of weak resolution will be little serviceable to the good of souls. Such watchmen as will be free from the blood of souls, and be serviceable to the interests of Christ's kingdom in turning sinners from darkness to light, must be men of spirit and resolution." How livingly Livingstone presented the truth on that memorable occasion at the kirk of Shotts! He had got through with the discussion of his subject, which lay in Ezekiel 36 : 26, 27, and was on the point of closing his discourse when a few drops of rain began to fall, and when the people began to put on their coverings, he asked them if they had any shelter from the drops of divine wrath, and was thus led to enlarge for nearly another hour in exhorting

them to flee to Christ, with so much of the power of God that about five hundred persons were converted. That prince of theologians, John Owen, in his preface to his treatise, "The Grace and Duty of being Spiritually Minded," observes, "Leaving others to the choice of their own methods and designs, I acknowledge that there are two things whereby I regulate my work in the whole course of my ministry. To impart those truths of whose power I hope I have had, in some measure, a real experience; and to press those duties which present occasions, temptations and other circumstances do render necessary to be attended to in a peculiar manner, are the things which I would principally apply myself to in the work of teaching others."

When one is really alive to the truth, he becomes one with it in heart, in thought, in purpose. He comes to understand how David uttered those imprecatory Psalms, entering so deeply into sympathy with the righteousness of God that it seems his own. He is one with God in tender love, in gracious sympathy, and in holy action. Do not all listeners say:

"Tell me the story softly,
With earnest tones, and grave;
Remember! I'm the sinner
Whom Jesus came to save.

Tell me the story always,
If you would really be,
In any time of trouble,
A comforter to me."

V. PRAYERFULLY. We cannot be successful without prayer. That is, we cannot prosper without God. Prayer takes hold of God and seeks his help. It relies on him. It engages God on behalf of his own truth, and the revelation of Jesus Christ as a living, loving, all-sufficient Saviour. It is the expression of our consciousness of inherent weakness and of our faith in the almightiness of God. It pleads for the fulfilment of his promises. It seeks the wisdom that is profitable to direct. It brings into the man the grace that fits him to be a vessel God may deign to use. If we depend on God in every work to which we put our hands, how much more should we do so in this! In this work he is most deeply interested, and he alone can render it successful. "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord," and this in both preacher and hearer alike. Matthew Henry writes thus on one occasion: "I endeavored to wrestle this day with God in secret and at his table for two things (and oh that I might prevail) the heart of the upright and the tongue of the learned. *I would*

excel in my work." Richard Trail, in his sermon on "By what means ministers may best win souls," says: "Ministers should pray much for themselves, for they have their corruptions like other men, and have temptations that none but ministers are assaulted with. They should pray for their message. How sweet and easy it is for a minister (and likely it is to be the more profitable to the people) to bring forth the Scriptures as food to the souls of his people, that he has had opened to his own heart by the power of the Holy Ghost in the exercise of faith and love to prayer. A minister should pray for a blessing on the Word; and he should be much in seeking God, particularly for his people. It may be this may be the reason why some ministers of meaner gifts and parts are more successful than some that are far above them in abilities; not because they preach better, so much as they pray more. *Many good sermons are lost for lack of much prayer in study.* Many illustrious examples must rise to the mind of every intelligent reader, enforcing the precept, "*prayerfully.*" Luther's long season of communion with God: Bradford and Whitfield studying the Bible on their knees: John Welsh's night wrestlings with God on behalf of his people; and above all, our Saviour's going apart to pray,

and spending the whole night in the silence of the mountains in prayer for new strength for new service. Dr. Andrewes, who was dean of Westminster at the beginning of the seventeenth century, was said to have spent a great part of five hours every day in prayer and devotion. Philip Doddridge used to say, "The more I pray the better I study." One of the most refreshing and inspiring books of our time is "Diary and Letters of A. A. Bonar, D.D," and from the day that he preached for Mr. Purris, of Jedburgh, to the close of his life, prayer predominates. We find him mourning his lack of prayer, his not having prayed enough, his having worked too much and prayed too little. Think of this! "What a sore night I have had in my bed, tossing in pain till morning, as well as all yesterday. I see it to be a chastisement from my Father, because I was taking too much time for active work, and too little for prayer." Again, "Too much work without corresponding prayer. To-day setting myself to fast and pray a little. The Lord seemed forthwith to send a dew upon my soul." What an example of prayerfulness is George Muller, of Bristol? How grandly he honors God in waiting upon Him through weeks, months, and even years—aye, and scores of years—for some particu-

lar person or some particular thing. His life reveals to us what believing prayer is!

Who can tell how much prayer had to do with the success of "The Sinner's Friend" by John Vine Hall? He tells us that he took twelve copies of the book, and kneeling before the Lord, implored his blessing upon the work. And that blessing came and is coming still. Richard Knill was eminently a man of prayer, and did everything in the spirit of prayer and therefore was a successful man. On his way to Madras he said to his fellow-passengers: "Now let us turn this ship into a Bethel; let us have family prayer every day and sermons on Sunday; it will sweeten the voyage, endear us to one another and draw down the divine blessing." Rowland Hill's cry was "Lord, help! Lord, help!" All our work ought to be begun, carried on, and ended with prayer.

> "More things are wrought by prayer
> Than this world dreams of."

But men of faith know this and act upon it. Let it never be forgotten. Prayer moves the hand that sustains the world. It touches the heart of the Father that is the centre of all goodness and love and light—the fountain of living waters for a dying world. Praying without ceasing will

cause the darkness of night to flee away, and day-break will come like a sweet summer's morning—beautiful, musical and fragrant—on the weary, troubled, desolate soul, and bring it into the rest of God.

VI. SCRIPTURALLY. We honor God most when we employ his own words in the preaching of the gospel. Indeed the command is, "Preach the word." Often the word of God is covered up by a mass of illustrative incidents, and the attention of the hearer is drawn away from, rather than attracted to the statement God makes. This is always an evil. It defeats the object the preacher has, or ought to have, in view. We believe with that earnest and greatly honored servant of God, Richard Baxter, "that the truths of God do perform their work more by their divine authority and proper evidence, and material excellency than by any ornaments of fleshly wisdom." The men who have been most used in doing solid work, work that stands the test of life, and of death, and of judgment, have all been scriptural preachers. The Bible has been the sword with which they have gone into battle, as did their Lord into the temptation of the wilderness. It has been the fountain whence they have drawn living water for dying souls. It has been the throbbing, beat-

ing heart that has sent forth its streams of consolation and comfort and joy to troubled hearts. It has been a light shining in a dark place. It has been the voice of God directing, the hand of God helping, aye saving lost sinners. As it has been, so is it still, he succeeds most effectually in doing the work of God who employs the instrument God provides. How scriptural are John McNeil, and Moody, and Meyer! Read Boston or Berridge or Brownlow North or Nettleton or Finney or Whitefield or any other man who has been largely used of God, and he is found to be decidedly a Bible preacher. William C. Burns and Robert Murray McCheyne and Andrew A. Bonar and Jonathan Edwards and Edward Payson and David Brainerd, all of whom lived and labored most earnestly and continuously to save men from going down into the pit, found their inspiration and their weapon in the Word. How conspicuously God sets forth the word as that through which he pours his converting power and loving grace! Our Lord in the parable of the sower tells us that "the sower soweth the word." Isaiah speaking as God's mouth says, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth nor thither, but watereth the earth and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give

seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." When Jonah was sent to Nineveh God said to him, "Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." We do not go a warfare at our own charges. God furnishes our equipment. Man must be born again; and they are "born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Peter 1 : 23. Men must be converted, and "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psa. 19 : 7. Men's lives must be made clean, and that is accomplished by taking heed to God's word. Psa. 119 : 9. Men must be sanctified, and they are sanctified through the truth of the word of God. John 17 : 17. God's word is the chief instrument. It not only enlightens the mind, and reaches the conscience, and arouses the soul, but like God's eye it searches all the man, leaving no part in the dark. It pierces like an arrow into the depths of man's nature, and makes him feel that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have

to do." Heb. 4 : 13. Hence God's word has infinite suggestiveness, and reaches where man's word never could. Often ministers are astonished at the reach of the words they have spoken, and the way in which they have taken hold of men, convicting them of sins known only to themselves and causing them such uneasiness that they had to confess them. It was God's word unveiling the heart and causing the light of the Lord to search the soul. The best weapon the soldier of the cross can use is God's word, which is the sword of the Spirit. Ephes. 6 : 17. Enduring work is done by it, because it goes into the conscience which is the deepest in man. And then only real work is done. To stir the emotional nature is not everything. There is many a hard heart behind a tearful face. Many a novel reader weeps over the misfortunes of hero and heroine, who never has a sigh for the real sufferers all around him. Touching stories well told may sweep tides of feeling over a congregation, like the wind bending in billows a golden wheatfield, but when the stories are told the feeling fades and the nature may be more callous than ever. The truth of God works differently. It is divinely adapted to our nature, and is as a nail in a sure place. It lives on and on, the incorruptible seed

of the word. When man's word passes away like the morning cloud and early dew, God's word shines on still like the mighty and unminished sun in the heavens : changeless. He who wishes to build for eternity must build with God's word. The truth, the truth is what men need. What gives the wonderful and enduring charm to Frances Ridley Havergal's books? The sweet Scripture exposition that is in them. What made Boston's sermons so attractive that many walked long weary miles to listen to them? Their profound views of divine truth. What is the preserving salt and the marvellous stimulating ingredient in the sermons of Robert M. McCheyne? The loving interpretation of Holy Scripture. Wherein lies the charm and the brilliant power of Joseph Parker? His devotion to the word of God. Endless is the legion of honor, whose worthy names might be mentioned.

The faith that saves is born in the heart of a man only through the word of God. It is the seed of the kingdom. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." That fact alone in the mind of an earnest man should wed him for ever to the word. This led Paul to preach the gospel, as he himself tells us, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in

demonstration of the Spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The grand preachers of the Old Testament, the prophets, went forth with this formula: "The word of the Lord came to me, saying." And it is to be so still. Our old ministers often added to their names three letters, "V. D. M.," marking a degree no university conferred, and yet the highest and best any minister can wear, "Minister of God's word" (*verbi Dei minister*). Their sermons are like Simon's house when Mary broke the beautiful alabaster-box of very precious ointment—full of the odor of the ointment. They make one feel that they delight in the law of God, and that it is within their hearts.

William C. Burns, the apostolic missionary, was known in China as the "Man of the Book." During the time of the insurgent movements in the Amoy district, when no other European could venture out among the rebels, he was free to go where he liked. "That 's the man of the Book," they would say, "he must not be touched." In confirmation of this love of the word on the part of William C. Burns, the Rev. Dr. Talmage, of the American Board of Missions, who knew him well, says, "His greatest power in preaching

seemed to me to consist in the manner in which he quoted the Holy Scriptures. In this I do not think I ever heard him surpassed."

Brownlow North was celebrated for his adherence to the simple truth of the word. On one occasion Miss —— said, "Mr. North, you always send one back to the Bible," when he replied, "That's just it; there's nothing for any of us but the Bible."

Dr. W. P. Mackay, of Hull, heard him once in Edinburgh, when he said to his son in his own emphatic way, "If God's word says one thing and your heart says another, call your heart a liar and believe God." "I sat and pondered over these words," says Dr. Mackay, "and they opened up quite a fresh line of things to me." He also mentions that the fourth chapter of his book, "Grace and Truth," was the fruit of the above sentence. So prolific is Scriptural preaching. Philip Henry, the father of the great commentator, resolved to "preach Christ crucified in a crucified style." So should every one intrusted with the mysteries of the kingdom. And that is, in a word, Scripturally. He who honors God honors his word also.

VII. With the Holy Ghost. This is a matter of the greatest moment. It was of such

immense consequence that our Lord, just before he ascended to heaven, enjoined upon his apostles whom he had called and commissioned to preach the gospel, that they should wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, "ye have heard of me." "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." . . . "Ye shall *receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you;* and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." This was necessary to fit them to preach. Already they had the Holy Ghost as the principle of spiritual life. But they needed more; they needed a distinct and definite enduement for service; an enduement that would make them bold and heroic, that would lift them above the fear of man that bringeth a snare; an enduement that would enlighten their minds in the knowledge of Christ, and give to them a sense of his presence such as would make them strong; an enduement that would carry them forward like a vessel whose sails were filled with a favoring breeze, and which would brook no opposition; an enduement that would arm them with grace, and sympathy, and patience, and love to the souls of men, so that

they could truly say, "We seek not yours, but you." This every worker in the vineyard of the Lord needs. Our Lord had the Holy Spirit dwelling in him as his life; but when he entered on his public ministry at his baptism he received a special enduement of the Holy Spirit—"the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him." Then we read, "And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness." This was the fulfilment of the promise in Isaiah 11 : 2, the promise of the sevenfold Spirit, as the Jewish commentators called it. "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord." Our Lord acknowledged this enduement when he read Isaiah 60 : 1 in the synagogue at Nazareth. He was anointed to preach the gospel to the poor, etc. And certainly if he, the Son of God, was thus prepared to preach, how much more do we need to be. We need a special enduement of the Holy Ghost for service. This is something more than conversion; it is the necessary qualification for service. We cannot do thorough and effective work without it. And therefore it ought to be well considered, deeply

pondered, clearly recognized, and continually acted upon. In the life of Christ we find it recognized not only in the synagogue of Nazareth, where he read the prophecy of Isaiah as fulfilled in himself, but in his work. "I by the Spirit of God cast out devils," Matt. 12 : 28; "He through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God," Heb. 9 : 14; "The Spirit that raised up Jesus," Rom. 11 : 9; "He through the Holy Ghost gave commandments unto the apostles," Acts 1 : 2. Being filled with the Holy Ghost, and having Him given to him without measure, John the Baptist witnesses, "The same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Our Lord's life and ministry is to type that of his servants. Take the early history of the church—the Acts of the apostles—and note how perfectly the lives of the apostles are fashioned after his. They obeyed Christ's command, which is the one way of receiving this enduement, and on the day of Pentecost, after ten days' waiting, the Holy Ghost was poured out upon them, "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost," Acts 2 : 4, and so fitted for the work that lay immediately before them. This is the characteristic note of the Acts. We read of "Peter filled with the Holy Ghost," 4 : 8. "They were all filled with

the Holy Ghost," 4 : 31. "Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," 6 : 5. Ananias said to Saul, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost," 9 : 17. "The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost," 13 : 52. And as to the communication of the Holy Ghost we meet statements similar to this again and again : "While Peter yet spake these words the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," 8 : 44. Peter in his first epistle tells the Hebrews to whom he writes that the apostles "preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." 1 Pet. 1 : 12. Here we see clearly the relation of the enduement of the Holy Ghost to service. It is essentially necessary. The minister of the gospel, standing between the living God and the dead sinner, is the divinely appointed channel of communication for the Holy Ghost. It was after the apostles were endued with the Holy Ghost, that as they preached the gospel the Holy Ghost fell on the people. This is surely a truth of the greatest importance for all Christian workers. It sets forth in a strong light their responsibility for thorough equipment. This is

the all-necessary power. Learning is good, eloquence is good, knowledge of human nature is good, but that which is of greatest value to a minister of the gospel is the enduement of the Holy Spirit.

This sheds abroad the love of God in his heart and brings him into true and thorough sympathy with those to whom he speaks. It gives him the key to open their hearts, and to take possession of their spiritual being. This gives the spiritual understanding of the truth; and unites his soul to it. It breaks the husk and lets him get the kernel. It goes beyond the outward letter to the inward spirit, and so arms the Word with convicting power. How mighty is the word of a spirit-filled man! Who can resist it? It bears all along like the tide at flood. This makes a man faithful and fearless in his dealings with the truth, so that he is no respecter of persons. He deals with all in the name of the Most High God and for eternity. He looks not on the things that are seen, but at the things that are unseen. This unveils Jesus Christ, and so sheds light upon all his character that it glorifies him. He is seen as Emmanuel—God with us: as the Lord our Righteousness: as God over all blessed for ever.

This enables him to work in the light, with sweet assurance before God ; and with strong confidence in presence of his fellow-men; and with a firm grip upon the exceeding great and precious promises which never fail of accomplishment.

This alters the entire temper of his spirit, and imparts a new tone to his preaching, and invests him with a wholly new character. Now he rises to the realization of his being God's ambassador. And there is in him, through a true humility and unselfishness, a greatness and grandeur which make themselves felt. This teaching has come into great prominence of late years. It has been strongly emphasized, no doubt, by the need of it having been pressed home on the hearts of earnest men as they sought to bring their fellow-Christians into the glorious liberty of the children of God. But it has always been felt and acted on more or less clearly by soul-winners in all ages. Livingstone at the kirk of Shotts in 1630 was reluctant to preach on the Thanksgiving Monday, and withdrew for prayer for the divine presence, because "he would not be alone in his work." What an answer he got ! Five hundred converts in one day.

William C. Burns did not consider that he had a warrant to proceed in any sacred duty without

a consciousness of the divine presence (page 285 of his Life). All who have been honored of God in service have rested their whole weight there. Unseen by mortal eye, unknown to human mind, they have waited and wept and prayed for power from on high: crying out with Moses, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence."

Miss Mary Lyons of Mount Holyoke Seminary was wont to utter these two expressions worthy of passing into Christian proverbs: "How easy it is to work *with* the Holy Spirit." "It is easier to obey God than any one else." The more clearly this precious line of light is seen in the life of Christ, and in the history of the early church, the more will every earnest soul-winner be drawn to walk in it, and have fellowship with the Lord, in being filled with the Holy Ghost, and thereby equipped for efficient service.

VIII. THE JOY OF PREACHING THE TRUTH THAT SAVES.

God has joined joy with the performance of every right act. And therefore, how much more with this act which has such far-reaching consequences. It is a seed which grows, not only in time, but in eternity. Its fruit will be enjoyed throughout the inconceivable millenniums yet to come. When we consider what it is in itself, what it is in its results and in its reach—we at once see the honor put upon us in permitting us to carry the good news of salvation to lost sinners of mankind. It is always pleasant to carry good news, even though they touch the most temporary interests—the work of a day, the relations for a month or two—but what a joy it is to carry good news that changes the destiny of the soul and the character of eternity. What a joy it is to preach truth that brings a new life and makes all things new! No joy can be comparable to that. No marvel that Paul proudly spoke of "making many rich," 2 Cor. 6:10. No gift is greater than that the gospel conveys. None so enriches. None lasts so long. None confers such high and noble benefits. We are not astonished

therefore when the Rev. John Brown, of Haddington, speaks in this strong way of the great privilege he had in preaching the gospel: "And now, after forty years preaching of Christ and his great and sweet salvation, I think that if God were to renew my youth, and put it entirely in my choice whether I would be King of Great Britain or a preacher of the gospel with 'the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,' who had to beg his bread all the laboring days of the week in order to have an opportunity of preaching on Sabbath to an assembly of sinful men, I would by his grace never hesitate a moment to make my choice. By the gospel do men live, and in it is the life of my soul."

George Herbert, the quaint poet of the Episcopal Church of England, in his "Country Parson" speaks of the pulpit as the minister's "joy and throne," no doubt because of the delight he has in making known the gospel of reconciliation. What a princely position he holds as an ambassador of Christ! He preaches peace through the blood of the cross. He offers mercy upon the acceptance of Jesus as the one sacrifice for sin. He holds forth invitations to receive the gift of eternal life in God's Son without money and without price. He beseeches all to be rec-

onciled to God on the ground laid down by Christ as the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the whole world. He proclaims an amnesty to all who will trust in Christ's atonement. He cries: "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." You trust in the law, and it condemns you because you cannot perfectly keep it. You trust in Jesus, and he justifies you — discharges you from the guilt and penalty of your sins—because he bore their pains himself in his own body on the cross. What a joy it is to be in a position to make such an announcement! George Whitefield on one occasion said: "The pleasure I have had this week in preaching the gospel I would not part with for ten thousand worlds." He felt he had a message to lost men, and the delivery of it was an intense joy. He often said: "Would ministers preach for eternity they would then act the part of true Christian orators, and not only calmly and coolly inform the understanding, but by persuasive, pathetic address endeavor to move the affections and warm the heart. To act otherwise bespeaks a sad ignorance of human nature, and such an in-

excusable indolence and indifference in the preacher as must constrain the hearers to suspect, whether they so will or not, that the preacher, let him be who he will, *only deals in the false commerce of unfelt truth.*" He only rises to the grandeur of his mission to whom eternity is present. Often David Brainerd cried : "Oh, *I love to live on the brink of eternity* in my views and meditations. This gives me a sweet, awful, and reverential sense and apprehension of God and divine things, when I see myself, as it were, standing before the judgment-seat of Christ."

The joy of the Christian worker is his strength. And out of it comes a sweet eloquence : a persuasive eloquence : an eloquence, even though it may not be richly rhetorical, that carries captive the hearer. It is just as Quintillian observes : "It is the heart and mental energy that inspire eloquence." The heart rules. Into whatever a man puts his heart, that carries the day. And as we call upon men for heart-work, it must be heart-work with ourselves.

This joy is to be our support in times of discouragement. It is to fill us with considerations that will enable us to rise above the dark clouds that meanwhile gather about us. The truth is not always attractive. Our Lord's congregation

on one occasion thinned out visibly, so that he said to his apostles: "Will ye also go away?" Paul sometimes gave offence in his declaration of the gospel. We hear him saying, "Am I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?" There are times that are not cheering. The light of sweet hope seems to die out of them. But the joy of the Lord, whose work we are doing, is to be our strength. Our work is not for to-day only, not for time only, but for eternity. We preach as Apelles painted, for eternity. We look not upon the things that are seen alone, but on the things that are unseen, for the things that are seen are temporal, and the things that are unseen are eternal. The seed dying might take all hope out of the heart of an inexperienced husbandman, but one who understands sees in that only a step toward life. So is it often with our discouragements. The darkness, and the apparent ruin that come are but stages of development toward the rising again of the seed of the kingdom in glorious power. We should always remember that it is the incorruptible seed of the Word. If the seed that has lain in the hand of an Egyptian mummy has life in it after three thousand years, how much more this precious seed! It will not return to God void.

Samuel Rutherford observes as he writes to his reverend and well-beloved brother William Dalgliesh : "Our ministry, whether by preaching or suffering, will cast a smell through the world, both of heaven and hell. 2 Cor. 2 : 15, 16. I persuade you, my dear brother, there is nothing out of heaven, next to Christ, dearer to me than my ministry." That is the estimate of every faithful servant of God. The highest joy of his life is found there. It is to him the beginning of heavenly joy. How manifold is his joy ! He has joy in the truth itself. He delights in its love, in its light, in its life, and in its divine excellencies. He has joy in declaring it to men. In handing them the gift of a spiritual revelation for their souls. He has joy in its renewing power upon the hearts and characters of men. He has joy in its far-reaching and eternal consequences, in the salvation of men and in the honoring of God. As there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, knowing what he is saved from, so there is joy in the minister's heart knowing what he is saved to. If the believing one rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory, how much more he who is using the means toward such a high and glorious end. He can from his heart say :

"I love to tell the story
Of unseen things above,
Of Jesus and his glory,
Of Jesus and his love.
I love to tell the story
Because I know it 's true;
It satisfies my longings
As nothing else would do.
I love to tell the story;
'T will be my theme in glory
To tell the old, old story
Of Jesus and his love."

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